



SciFiNow^{ANNUAL}

A COLLECTION OF THE WORLD'S BEST SCI-FI, FANTASY AND HORROR MAGAZINE



WELCOME TO SciFiNow ANNUAL

The world of sci-fi is one that is ever changing, and is never quite the same as it was last week. This year we saw the invasion of a gun-toting raccoon and his – rather emotional – friendship with a watching, talking tree. Marvel have once again ruled the box office, with not one but four films this year. The X-Men made a gallant return in *Days of Future Past* and Captain America came back for round two with the fall of S.H.I.E.L.D. creating a massive impact on it's small screen counter part. TV has seen a number of strong returning shows; *Arrow* continues to be the CWs best output, with it's spin-off *The Flash* looking to take the world by storm and then you have the constant classics of *Doctor Who* and the modern ones in *Hannibal* and *Sleepy Hollow*. It wouldn't be a reflection on the year of **SciFiNow** without TimeWarp and we've picked some of the best from the last year. And let's not forget the puzzles, an annual wouldn't be an annual without the puzzles. We are Groot.



SciFiNow^{ANNUAL}

Imagine Publishing Ltd
Richmond House
33 Richmond Hill
Bournemouth
Dorset BH2 6EZ
☎ +44 (0) 1202 586200
Website: www.imagine-publishing.co.uk

Publishing Director
Aaron Asadi

Head of Design
Ross Andrews

Production Editor
Jen Neal

Senior Art Editor
Greg Whitaker

Designer
Sarah Bellman

Printed by
William Gibbons, 26 Planetary Road, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 3XT

Distributed in the UK, Eire & the Rest of the World by:
Marketforce, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0SU
Tel 0203 148 3300 www.marketforce.co.uk

Distributed in Australia by:
Network Services (a division of Bauer Media Group), Level 21 Civic Tower, 66-68 Goulburn Street,
Sydney, New South Wales 2000, Australia Tel +61 2 8667 5288

Disclaimer
The publisher cannot accept responsibility for any unsolicited material lost or damaged in the post. All text and layout is the copyright of Imagine Publishing Ltd. Nothing in this bookazine may be reproduced in whole or part without the written permission of the publisher. All copyrights are recognised and used specifically for the purpose of criticism and review. Although the bookazine has endeavoured to ensure all information is correct at time of print, prices and availability may change. This bookazine is fully independent and not affiliated in any way with the companies mentioned herein.

SciFiNow Annual © 2014 Imagine Publishing Ltd

ISBN 978 1910 439 111

Part of the

SciFiNow
bookazine series



Contents

010



112



Best Films of 2014

- 010** Guardians of the Galaxy
- 018** Captain America: The Winter Soldier
- 026** X-Men: Days of Future Past
- 034** Dawn of the Planet of the Apes
- 044** The Lego Movie
- 050** Interstellar
- 056** Edge of Tomorrow
- 062** Godzilla
- 070** The Best Movie Posters of 2014



050



026

Best TV of 2014

- 080** Hannibal
- 086** Utopia
- 092** Orphan Black
- 096** Game of Thrones
- 106** The Walking Dead
- 112** Sleepy Hollow
- 118** Arrow
- 126** Bates Motel
- 132** Gotham
- 138** Doctor Who





The Best of Timewarp

- 148** Batman: The Movie
- 154** Ghostbusters
- 158** 2001: Space Odyssey
- 166** Shaun of the Dead
- 170** Gremlins

**"THAT'S HOW I FOUND
OUT THERE WAS NO
SANTA CLAUS"**



Best Films of 2014

FROM MARVEL'S BIGGEST HIT OF THE YEAR TO THE MOST AWESOME ANIMATION

010 Guardians of the Galaxy

018 Captain America: The Winter Soldier

026 X-Men: Days of Future Past

034 Dawn of the Planet of the Apes

044 The Lego Movie

050 Interstellar

056 Edge of Tomorrow

064 Godzilla

070 The Best Movie Posters of 2014

034



010



026

070





018
044



"THEN I GUESS WE'LL
JUST HAVE TO WING IT...
THAT'S A BAT PUN"





“BY MAKING GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY, MARVEL COMPLETELY OPENED UP THE COSMIC TOYBOX AND EVERYTHING THAT’S RELATED TO THAT”

DAN ABNETT

BIG DAMN HEROES

HOW MARVEL'S MISFIT BAND OF KILLERS, THIEVES, A WALKING TREE AND A PSYCHOTIC RACCOON BECAME THE SAVIOURS OF OUR SUMMER...

EVERYBODY KNOWS IT'S THE UNLIKELY HEROES THAT ARE THE TRULY GREAT ONES. WE'VE HAD AN ENDLESS PARADE OF SQUARE-JAWED, SIX-PACKED GOOD

citizens to choose from, but this summer we saw an unruly gang of thieves, killers and psychopaths save the galaxy and truly take the Marvel brand to the next level. Forget flowing locks, poster boys and impossibly sculpted goatees; the face of the year's biggest comic-book movie is a lunatic raccoon brandishing a machine gun.

Going by this evidence, it makes sense that *Guardians Of The Galaxy* was talked about as Marvel's biggest risk to date. Based on a relatively unknown super-team that's had several different incarnations since its comic-book debut in 1968, it takes the Marvel universe to the far reaches of space and boasts a roster of, as team leader Peter Quill (Chris Pratt) puts it, "A thief, two thugs, an assassin and a maniac." They're so underestimated in their own movie that Quill can't even get his own self-aggrandising alias – Star-Lord – to stick, but that didn't stop it becoming the biggest box office taking of the year.

"That's the great thing about the whole cast: at the end of the day, we really are just

a bunch of misfits, man," enthuses star Dave Bautista, who plays vengeful, muscle-bound Guardian Drax the Destroyer. "We don't have these glorified pasts; we've all got pretty rough, messed-up pasts!"

"The Guardians Of The Galaxy are a team of outer space criminals, basically, who get tossed together and find themselves in the presence of something that could be truly evil, and they decide to band together and sort of do away with their sordid past and fight evil together, because they've never done it before," writer/director James Gunn explained when pressed to pitch his heroes at an AMC Q&A. This group's sordid past makes Tony Stark's boozy womanising look almost cosy in comparison.

So we've got self-styled outlaw Star-Lord, who was abducted from Earth as a child, and is still mentally stuck in the Eighties and Han Solo fandom. There's murderous assassin Gamora (Zoe Saldana), the green-skinned deadliest woman in the universe tormented by the fact that supervillain Thanos (Josh Brolin) is her foster father, and Drax, a rage-fuelled goliath who is determined to kill Thanos as payback for the deaths of his family. Finally, there's walking tree Groot (Vin Diesel), who can only say "I am

Groot," and Rocket (Bradley Cooper), that aforementioned raccoon who has plenty to say for himself in between bursts of automatic weapons fire. If this sounds like something different – well, it is.

Alongside co-writer Andy Lanning, veteran Marvel comics writer Dan Abnett is responsible for what is now the definitive *Guardians Of The Galaxy* line-up, shepherding them across a fan-favourite 25-issue run from 2008 to 2010 that directly inspired James Gunn's treatment.

"I thought 'Wow, that's amazing!'" he laughs, recalling the moment when he heard about the movie. "Mainly because, with all due respect to the Guardians Of The Galaxy, they are not premier league, world-famous characters like Iron Man and Captain America. For Marvel to take the plunge and take one of their less well-known things and develop that was rather stunning."

Considering the convoluted history of this not-exactly blockbuster brand, it's not only a minor miracle that *Guardians Of The Galaxy* is getting the tentpole treatment, but that Abnett and Lanning were able to shape it into something cohesive in the first place. It's all part of one big process – albeit accidental – whereby a space-bound back-up strip from ➤

SUPER SONGS

What's on
Marvel's
mightiest
mix tapes



A: TROUBLE MAN BY
MARVIN GAYE

B: STAR-SPANGLED MAN



A: SHOOT TO THRILL BY AC/DC

B: IRON MAN BY BLACK SABBATH



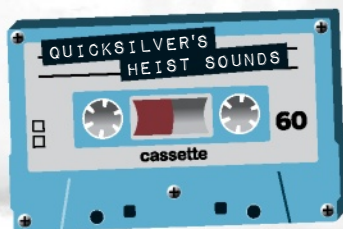
A: HOOKED ON A FEELING BY
BLUE SWEDE

B: STAR WARS THEME BY
JOHN WILLIAMS



A: ORINOCO FLOW BY ENYA

B: THE BEAST IN ME BY JOHNNY CASH



A: TIME IN A BOTTLE BY JIM CROCE

B: THE GREAT GIG IN THE SKY BY
PINK FLOYD

➤ the fag end of the Silver Age has become a grin-along silver screen actioner set to the uber-camp tribal chorus of Blue Swede's *Hooked On A Feeling*.

"Yeah, *Guardians Of The Galaxy*, traditionally speaking, is a completely different set of characters," explains Abnett. "It's set in the future, and it's Vance Astro, Yondu, Charlie-27 and Martinex, and has nothing to do with this. The idea that they are unrecognised heroes doing whatever they can do anyway, despite the fact that they're not famous like the Avengers, was a cool part of that."

WHEN ABNETT AND LANNING LAUNCHED *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY* IN THE WAKE OF MARVEL'S ANNIHILATION EVENT, THEY INHERITED A FLEDGLING

team-up of Star-Lord, Groot and Rocket Raccoon, who had been press-ganged from a Kree prison like a star-spanning Dirty Dozen. Already disparate – Star-Lord began life as a pulp adventurer unconnected to the Marvel universe, Groot was a pre-Fantastic Four monster-comic nasty, and Rocket Raccoon a cartoonish swashbuckler – the trio had a handful of canonical appearances to their names, few of which made any sort of logical sense. Although universe-shattering big guns like Nova, Adam Warlock and Quasar passed

through the first few issues of *Guardians Of The Galaxy*, it wasn't long before the creative duo settled on the relatively low-key additions of Drax and Gamora, both Jim Starlin creations with a Thanos-shaped axe to grind.

"It was a case of who are the most interesting, who fits together, who doesn't fit together, because you get internal conflict in the team," Abnett remembers. "So to have Drax and Gamora, who are both antiheroes, and trying to mould them into more noble characters was fun – Star-Lord trying to hold it all together, and Rocket and Groot are like a wonderful Han and Chewie double act. They were individual characters who came from different places, but putting them together, you get this great mix of things. In the course of writing the book, I played around with the line-up several times, but I think the cast as it appears in the film is sort of the definitive core of the team; the ones I consider to be primary members of it."

He's not alone in that belief. When it was time to make the movie, writer/director James Gunn knew exactly where to look, tweeting that Abnett and Lanning are "The fathers of the modern *Guardians Of The Galaxy*! We wouldn't be making this movie without them!"

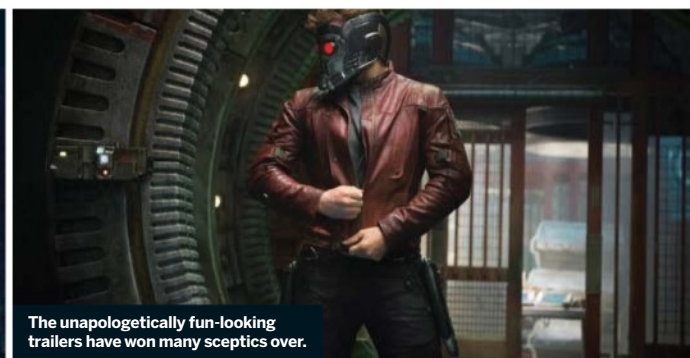
"I think he was being very open about the fact that he'd been inspired by that run, and it was extremely surreal," Abnett tells us.

Gunn's respect for Abnett and Lanning's run is very much reciprocated, and Abnett tells us that a trip on set completely reassured him that his antiheroes were in safe hands. "[He's] really, really clever," enthuses Abnett. "Having watched them making it and watching the way James Gunn operates in terms of a director... he's got a good, funny, exciting story scripted, but I watched in the course of an afternoon as he took a scene and made a good scene even better by doing a number of different takes where he developed some of the spontaneous things the actors were doing, so it was very organic. There was something extraordinarily familiar about it, that it wasn't just characters who had the same name or had been adjusted for cinematic purposes; there was the mix of proper serious action and sort of in-universe naturalistic humour. You can see that in the trailer, the slightly irreverent nature to it."

It's not just Abnett who's impressed with the way Gunn has handled this property. Everyone at the House of Ideas, from Kevin Feige to Joss Whedon, has been effusive in their praise of the director, but a lot ➤



Chris Pratt's in full Han Solo-wannabe mode as Star-Lord.



The unapologetically fun-looking trailers have won many sceptics over.



GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY
IS THE NEXT BIG THING, I FEEL
STRONGLY ABOUT THAT

DAVE BAUTISTA

GUARDIANS ASSEMBLE!

Who's who in Guardians Of The Galaxy



**STAR-LORD/
PETER
QUILL**

ROLE: LEADER
ATTRIBUTES: QUICK-THINKING, BIG-MOUTHED CHANCER WITH AN EYE FOR THE LADIES AND A BIGGER HEART THAN HE LETS ON
PLAYED BY: CHRIS PRATT
As a man who has fully embraced his identity as an intergalactic rogue while being very much still rooted in the pop culture of the Eighties, Peter Quill is the kind of unlikely hero that Chris Pratt was born to play. It's the first step in Pratt's move into attaining fully fledged leading man status.



DRAX

ROLE: MUSCLE
ATTRIBUTES: BUILT LIKE A BRICK SKITHOUSE AND WITH A THIRST FOR REVENGE, YOU DO

NOT WANT TO GET IN HIS WAY
PLAYED BY: DAVE BAUTISTA
Drax the Destroyer might work with a lot less elegance than Gamora, but he gets the job done. He's a man of few words and mighty deeds, so the casting of WWE star Dave Bautista makes sense. The wrestler and sometime actor may not have the longest list of credits, but he impressed as heartless killer Bronze Body in the RZA's barking mad *The Man With The Iron Fists*, and he's definitely got the physique and thousand-yard stare.



GAMORA

ROLE: ASSASSIN
ATTRIBUTES: A DEADLY, HOT-TEMPERED ASSASSIN WITH A DARK PAST WHO

KNOWS EXACTLY HOW DANGEROUS SHE IS
PLAYED BY: ZOE SALDANA
After seeing her sidelined in *Star Trek Into Darkness*, it's great to see Saldana sink her teeth into the role of the self-proclaimed 'Deadliest woman in the whole galaxy'. The actress has played her share of cold-blooded badasses before in movies like *Colombiana* and, to an extent, *Avatar*, but it's her performance as stone-cold killer Aisha in *The Losers* that suggests that she's the perfect choice for Thanos' foster-daughter Gamora.



GROOT

ROLE: MUSCLE
ATTRIBUTES: WELL... HE'S A WALKING, TALKING TREE. THAT SHOULD

JUST ABOUT COVER IT
VOICED BY: VIN DIESEL
Rocket's partner in crime is Groot, a sentient tree-like being with the ability to walk, talk (well, he says "I am Groot") and wipe the floor with practically any number of bad guys. Somehow managing to be even stranger than a talking psychotic raccoon, Groot's generally benign nature, combined with the ability to throw down if need be, makes Vin Diesel the only choice when the time to cast voice actors came about. "I am Groot" indeed.



ROCKET

ROLE: ULTRA-VIOLENCE
ATTRIBUTES: WISE-CRACKING RACCOON WITH A PENCHANT FOR

KILLING EVERYTHING WITH A MACHINE GUN BIGGER THAN HE IS
VOICED BY: BRADLEY COOPER
If *Guardians* is going to have one breakout character, it'll be Rocket. There is nothing about him, from his hair-trigger temper to the fact that he's a talking raccoon, that isn't brilliant. There were plenty of rumours and fan wish lists for Rocket's voice, but James Gunn chose Bradley Cooper. Anyone who saw him in *American Hustle* and *Silver Linings Playbook* will know he's got manic intensity and mood swings down pat.

AND ON THE DARK SIDE...

LEE PACE IS RONAN THE ACCUSER

The *Pushing Daisies* and *The Hobbit* star plays the film's primary villain, a religious and deeply evil agent of Thanos who punishes the weak. Pace described the character to us as "a real psychopathic beast", and together with Nebula he'll make life very difficult for our heroes.

KAREN GILLAN IS NEBULA

The *Doctor Who* star leaves the Doctor-dependent Amy Pond behind to play blue-skinned assassin Nebula, who is seen slicing her way through the trailer. She claims that Thanos is her father – another reason for clashing with Gamora.

BENICIO DEL TORO IS THE COLLECTOR

Last seen during the end credits of *Thor: The Dark World* accepting the Aether gem from Lady Sif and Volstagg, Benicio del Toro's Collector is a bit of an unknown quality. He's not necessarily evil, but he's an obsessive lunatic who will put his own interests above the safety of others.

of moviegoers who will be shelling out for tickets to the latest Marvel extravaganza may not be too familiar with his work. His highest-profile gigs so far have been writing Zack Snyder's *Dawn Of The Dead* remake (arguably still that director's best work) and the *Scooby Doo* films. Genre fans, however, will know him as the director of hilarious creature feature *Slither* and razor-sharp superhero satire *Super* (and the writer of sillier superhero satire *The Specials*). It's not a surprise to hear that the irreverence Abnett talks about is very much present and correct. Summer tent-pole movies don't seem like the most natural place for improvisation, for example, but Bautista tells us that Gunn encouraged his stars to go off book.

"Tons, tons – we did a lot of that, man," he remembers. "James was really up for that, and he's not one of those directors who's just, 'You've got to stick by the script'; he was constantly throwing ideas at you, 'Say this,' 'Try it this way,' you'd get this over the loudspeaker. And it made for a lot of fun – a lot of fun. With Chris [Pratt] and Zoe [Saldana] being so witty, it just made for some really good scenes."

It's hard to imagine that much freedom being offered up on a film where there were a lot of nerves. The laid-back, spontaneity-friendly atmosphere on set is almost certainly due to the fact that Gunn

put a similar level of effort and deliberation into choosing his cast and their dynamic as Abnett and Lanning did in choosing their line-up. Pratt is still best known for playing *Parks And Recreation*'s loveable doofus Andy Dwyer, but he's on the cusp of becoming an A-list leading man, with *Jurassic World* on the horizon, while Saldana has been quietly doing overlooked work in overblown blockbusters for years.

IT'S AWESOME, AND IT MAKES FOR A LOT OF FUN," EXPLAINS BAUTISTA OF THE GROUP INTERACTION. "A LOT OF GOOD LAUGHS AND A LOT OF GOOD DRAMA AS WELL, IT WAS REALLY

cool, man. Because James Gunn, he told me this, he really was looking for the chemistry within the cast. He was real particular about who he wanted for this movie, because he wanted the cast to have a great chemistry. They needed that for this film to work and be successful, and it couldn't be any better. It really was a total family atmosphere, and it was so much fun coming to work every day. It was not easy; these were long, long days, man – a lot of make-up, but it was just so much fun. It just flew by."

In fact, the more you look at *Guardians Of The Galaxy*, the more that 'riskiest blockbuster' label looks like a misnomer. We might not have seen these characters before – indeed, a lot of filmgoers will never have



Pratt has signed a multi-picture deal with Marvel.



Zoe Saldana takes on yet another ass-kicking role as Gamora.



MEET THE DESTROYER

Dave Bautista tells us why Drax the Destroyer is the role of a lifetime...

After providing muscle for self-aware B-movies *The Man With The Iron Fists* and *Riddick*, ex-wrestler Dave Bautista has entered the big leagues to play *Guardians Of The Galaxy*'s vengeful but big-hearted Drax the Destroyer. Not only is *Guardians* Marvel's opportunity to show off a new side of themselves, this is Bautista's chance to prove himself as an actor, as the star explains...

How much did you know about Guardians before you went to audition?

Well, I was actually just given the sides when I auditioned for Drax. So I wasn't completely familiar with the rest of the characters, and the more I tried to research Drax – which wasn't easy to do – I became familiar with the other Guardians. I was totally confused the first time I got the sides for Drax; I just didn't get him at all. With him being so literal and everything, even the way he speaks, I'm from the streets, man – I speak like I'm from the streets – I just couldn't relate; it was rough.

Once you got a handle on him, it must have been a pretty exciting role to get your teeth into.

Oh man, it was great. This was a dream role for me, and it was something that I really needed. Not wanted; I needed this. Even more than I wanted it, because I left behind wrestling, which was my bread and butter, because I wanted to become an actor, and not just a guy who was in movies. I fell in love with acting, and it was really hard to get people to take me seriously, coming from the wrestling background. So it wasn't easy, and with Drax being such an emotional rollercoaster, it gave me the opportunity to really show an acting range, and not just be the big tough guy who kicks down doors, shoots people, says a tough one-liner and calls it a day.

Was it quite a long audition process?

It was. It was not only going back for audition after audition and screen tests, but this went on for months, and they didn't exclude me for the part, but they didn't confirm me! Then we got into reading all the internet rumours, and it was just very stressful, because like I said, I needed this even more than I wanted it. My career had got to that point where I'd been away from wrestling for four years, and I'd gone for four years without making a decent paycheck, but I still had all the same bills coming in, and I wasn't getting any younger, then to be breaking into acting in your 40s and to be walking away from what has been your career for the last 15 years, it's not an easy thing to do. So it was a make-or-break situation, and it was really dire straits.



“DRAX HAS GOT A HEART OF GOLD UNDER ALL THE GREEN AND TATTOOS, SCARS, SKULLS AND WHATNOT”

DAVE BAUTISTA

How did you get on with James Gunn?

Oh man, besides him just making everything really fun, he also made everything really easy. He knew exactly what he wanted, he had this vision, and he made it very easy for everyone. He also gave everybody a lot of freedom. I clicked with him right off the bat, right at the audition, he's just got this way of making you feel very relaxed. There's nothing pretentious about him, man; he's

just a regular guy, and he makes you feel right at home and really comfortable. That's what kind of made this very easy for me, because it was very intimidating. You know, I'm stepping on set with some of the biggest names in Hollywood now, but everyone just made it so much fun. I hate to keep throwing that word around over and over, but it really was. It was such a joy making this movie, man.

It must have been quite strange acting opposite two characters – Groot and Rocket – who weren't there.

Obviously the animated characters were not there, but we did have awesome, incredible actors as stand-ins. Sean Gunn, I want to mention him because I had a lot of scenes with Rocket, and Sean is such an incredibly talented actor. He was so absorbed into this role – even as a stand-in – that he brought out the best in everybody. It's very easy to be in the moment with a guy who's that talented.

What do you think Drax brings?

Drax is constantly described as being out for revenge, but I try to describe him as being a character who is really more heartbroken than anything. The tragic loss of his family, they didn't just die; they were murdered. He's just heartbroken, and that's where his revenge stems from. But Drax has got a heart of gold under all the green and tattoos, scars, skulls and whatnot; he's actually a really decent noble human being. Well, not human being obviously; person, alien!

How did you get on with the green make-up and the scars?

It wasn't so bad; I'm a very patient person. I kind of have this zen thing where I can just zone out for hours, so it wasn't so bad. But, one or two days, fine; three days, it's OK; four days, it starts getting a little rough; five days, it's getting a little itchy, and when you do six days in a row it just starts to become... you've really got to zone out and be patient, because your skin starts to get dry. It's itchy, it's peeling and painful, you get more sensitive, and it feels like you're not standing there for four hours anymore; you're standing there for ten hours! And you're sweating inside the make-up, and it's just getting gross! It was a little uncomfortable, it tested my patience.

ROCKET & GROOT: STEAL THE GALAXY!

James Gunn wasn't the only one to recognise the importance of Dan Abnett to *Guardians Of The Galaxy*, as Marvel have drafted him in to write their first original prose novel about two of the film's guaranteed scene stealers: *Rocket Raccoon & Groot: Steal The Galaxy!*

"It came about at short notice, and there's no shame in admitting that Marvel were sitting there thinking, 'What other *Guardians*-related things can we produce to tie into the event halo which surrounds the release of the movie?'" laughs Abnett. "And Marvel Publishing came to me and said 'We know that when you're not writing comics you write novels; would you like to write a Rocket and Groot novel?'"

Typically, Marvel tie-in novels are adaptations of classic comics, but Abnett was only interested in an original story. "I think things are written very much for the medium in which they're presented," he tells us, "particularly with Rocket and Groot and the cosmic material. I thought there were different approaches. It's a very fast-paced, action-packed adventure, as you would expect – it has got a high degree of humour in it."

Abnett is particularly pleased that he managed to make it accessible for newcomers while packing it full of references for the initiated. "If you only know *Guardians* because of the movie, you will be able to understand it completely. If you were a comics fan, you will get all the in-jokes, some of which are just put in there for sheer gleeful fun."

If you're not won over by these two getting a standalone story, allow Abnett to sum up its appeal. "At the end of my pitch I said, 'What I'm proposing doing here is John Woo's *Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy!*'" Sold.

Rocket Raccoon & Groot: Steal The Galaxy! is available now.





AGENT CARTER

CAST: HAYLEY ATWELL, DOMINIC COOPER
SHOWRUNNERS: TARA BUTTERS, MICHELE FAZEKAS
RELEASED: EARLY 2015

Hayley Atwell has recently revealed that the ABC series will run for eight episodes, and will air between the first and second half of Season Two of *Agents Of SHIELD*. We can expect Dominic Cooper's Howard Stark to return; Atwell stated that she was looking forward to pranking her *Captain America* co-star.

ANT-MAN

CAST: PAUL RUDD, MICHAEL DOUGLAS, EVANGELINE LILLY, PATRICK WILSON, MICHAEL PEÑA **DIRECTOR:** PEYTON REED **RELEASED:** 17 JULY 2015
The next 'riskiest Marvel movie' took a big hit when Edgar Wright left the project after eight years working on it. *Bring It On*'s Peyton Reed is his replacement, while *Anchorman*'s Adam McKay has been brought in to rewrite the script. The cast, led by Paul Rudd as Scott Lang and Michael Douglas as Dr Hank Pym, will stay the same, as will the 17 July 2015 release date.

BEYOND THE AVENGERS

There's been no concrete word on a standalone movie for either the Hulk or Black Widow, and the same goes for *Iron Man 4* and *Thor 3*. However, we do know that the Russo brothers will return to direct *Captain America 3*, which will take on *Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice* in May 2016.

AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON

CAST: ROBERT DOWNEY JR., CHRIS EVANS, CHRIS HEMSWORTH, SCARLETT JOHANSSON **DIRECTOR:** JOSS WHEDON
RELEASED: 24 APRIL 2015

While *Guardians Of The Galaxy* has taken the Marvel movies into space, *Avengers: Age Of Ultron* will push our heroes into the age of magic. The biggest confirmed news is that Josh Brolin will be appearing as Thanos in *Guardians*. Will we get a glimpse of him in *Age Of Ultron*?

NETFLIX

DAREDEVIL

CAST: CHARLIE COX, VINCENT D'ONOFRIO
SHOWRUNNER: STEVEN S DEKNIGHT
RELEASED: 2015 TBC

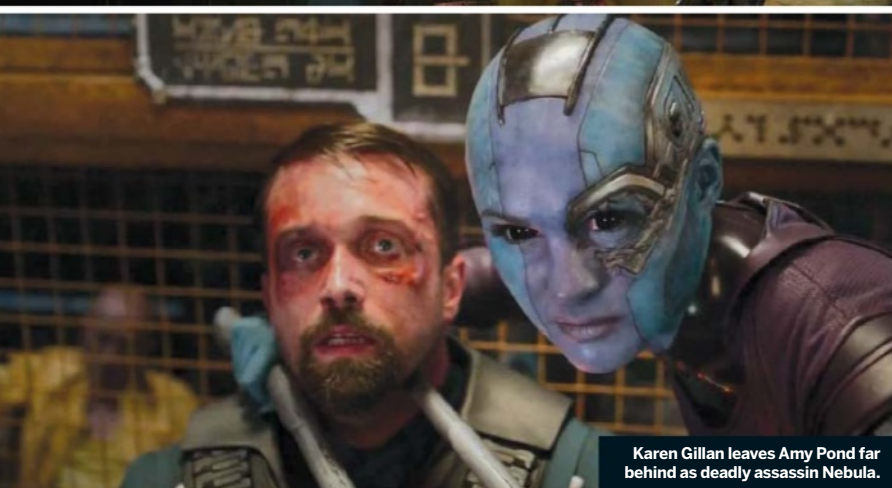
As previously reported, Drew Goddard stepped down as director and showrunner to tackle Sony's *Sinister Six* movie, and has been replaced by fellow Whedon-verse veteran Steven S DeKnight. *Boardwalk Empire* and *Stardust*'s Charlie Cox will be playing The Man Without Fear, while Vincent D'Onofrio will take on his arch nemesis Wilson Fisk, aka the Kingpin.

DOCTOR STRANGE

CAST: UNKNOWN **DIRECTOR:** SCOTT DERRICKSON **RELEASED:** TBA
Marvel has finally delivered on its promise to bring Doctor Strange to the big screen, and has chosen a director. Following that little tease in *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, *Sinister*'s Scott Derrickson will bring Marvel's Master of the Mystic Arts to life. Benedict Cumberbatch and Tom Hardy are reportedly the studio's top choices to don the cape and goatee.

“ROCKET AND GROOT ARE LIKE A WONDERFUL HAN AND CHEWIE DOUBLE ACT

DAN ABNETT



Karen Gillan leaves Amy Pond far behind as deadly assassin Nebula.



➤ heard of them before – but the same can be said of many of Marvel’s heroes. After all, what percentage of people who saw *Thor* were fans of the comic-book character? When we put the risk question to Bautista, it gets a firm response.

“No, we didn’t think that way at all in terms of it being a risk,” he tells us. “I know that term came up a lot, and I think it’s really just because of the fear of the unknown. I think it’s hard to get an audience to be sucked into something they’re really unfamiliar with, and that was kind of the challenge. Not that being risky isn’t a part of a good quality product, but we never felt that way on set, because we knew how good it was. We were more excited, like we can’t wait to share it with everybody because it’s that good. It’s the next big thing, I feel strongly about that, and I think everybody who was involved in this, even the Marvel bigwigs, I think they’re excited about this.”

Those Marvel bigwigs have been very canny over the last few years, moving in

leaps and bounds ahead of their competitors to create a coherent universe of franchises within franchises without alienating their audiences. The Marvel logo that sits above the movie’s title will almost certainly be as much of a draw as the brilliant trailer, and Abnett tells us that *Guardians* represents not only a clever business move on their part, but an essential storytelling one.

THINK IT’S MARVEL BEING EXTREMELY SMART IN THE MOVIE-MAKING DEPARTMENT AND SEEING OPPORTUNITIES. FOR INSTANCE, BY MAKING GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY, THEY COMPLETELY

opened up the cosmic toybox and everything that’s related to that, so that gives them enormous amounts of opportunity to develop other things within it,” Abnett explains. “And it also shows that they’re not afraid to go forth with some of the lesser-known characters, which again opens up all those secondary and tertiary level heroes, many of whom are fantastic; they’re just not as famous as the big ones.”



Still, just like *Thor* and *Iron Man*, the *Guardians* will be on the map as soon as the film comes out. Few studios have been as successful at providing audiences with characters they didn’t know that they loved, and it’s hard to believe that *Guardians* will be the exception to that. “It’s something that people are not familiar with, but they’re going to be familiar with it after the movie comes out, and I think that they’re going to crave more, and they’re going to want to see more from these characters, man, because they’re awesome,” enthuses Bautista.

“I think it’s just the sheer boldness of saying, ‘Your next Marvel movie will feature a talking raccoon and a walking tree. Get used to it,’” laughs Abnett. “And people have either gone, ‘Ah no, they’ve jumped the shark,’ or, as most people have gone ‘That’s so cool! Where are the toys?’”

Guardians Of The Galaxy will be out on Blu Ray on 24 November.





“

DOESN'T MATTER WHAT THE PRESS SAYS. DOESN'T MATTER WHAT THE POLITICIANS OR THE MOBS SAY. DOESN'T MATTER IF THE WHOLE COUNTRY DECIDES THAT SOMETHING WRONG IS SOMETHING RIGHT. THIS NATION WAS FOUNDED ON ONE PRINCIPLE ABOVE ALL ELSE: THE REQUIREMENT THAT WE STAND UP FOR WHAT WE BELIEVE, NO MATTER THE ODDS OR THE CONSEQUENCES. WHEN THE MOB AND THE PRESS AND THE WHOLE WORLD TELL YOU TO MOVE, YOUR JOB IS TO PLANT YOURSELF LIKE A TREE BESIDE THE RIVER OF TRUTH, AND TELL THE WHOLE WORLD...

NO, YOU MOVE.”

FROM AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #537 (FEB 2007) BY J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI



THE WORLD'S SHIFTIEST ESPIONAGE ORGANISATION STRUCK GOLD WHEN THEY FOUND THE FROZEN BODY OF THE ONLY SUPERHERO IN THE MARVEL CINEMATIC UNIVERSE WHO FOLLOWS ORDERS. BUT THE BUBBLE IS ABOUT TO BURST.

In *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, it's clear that SHIELD's motivations are going to be at war with Steve Rogers' (Chris Evans) unflinching moral compass. He thinks he's rejoined the fight to protect our freedom, but it soon dawns on him that fear is the only product. Events will force him to question

whether his chain of command really deserves respect, coming to verbal blows with Nick Fury (Samuel L. Jackson) and Alexander Pierce (Robert Redford), a high-ranking SHIELD officer who's not afraid to "build a new world by tearing the old one down."

This isn't the first time Cap has been let down by shady authority figures. In the classic conspiracy arc of Steve Englehart's Seventies *Captain America* And *The Falcon* storyline 'Secret Empire', the man out of

time became a man without a country. It reflected the national disillusionment of the era, and brought renewed relevance to the flag-clad hero, who was rapidly falling out of favour. Paranoia and mistrust continued in Ed Brubaker and Steve Epting's seminal 'Winter Soldier' run, which has heavily inspired this movie beyond merely the title.

"Marvel had it in their heads that they really wanted to make a political thriller, which we loved, because that's what makes Brubaker's run so brilliant," says ➤

CAPTAIN AMERICA

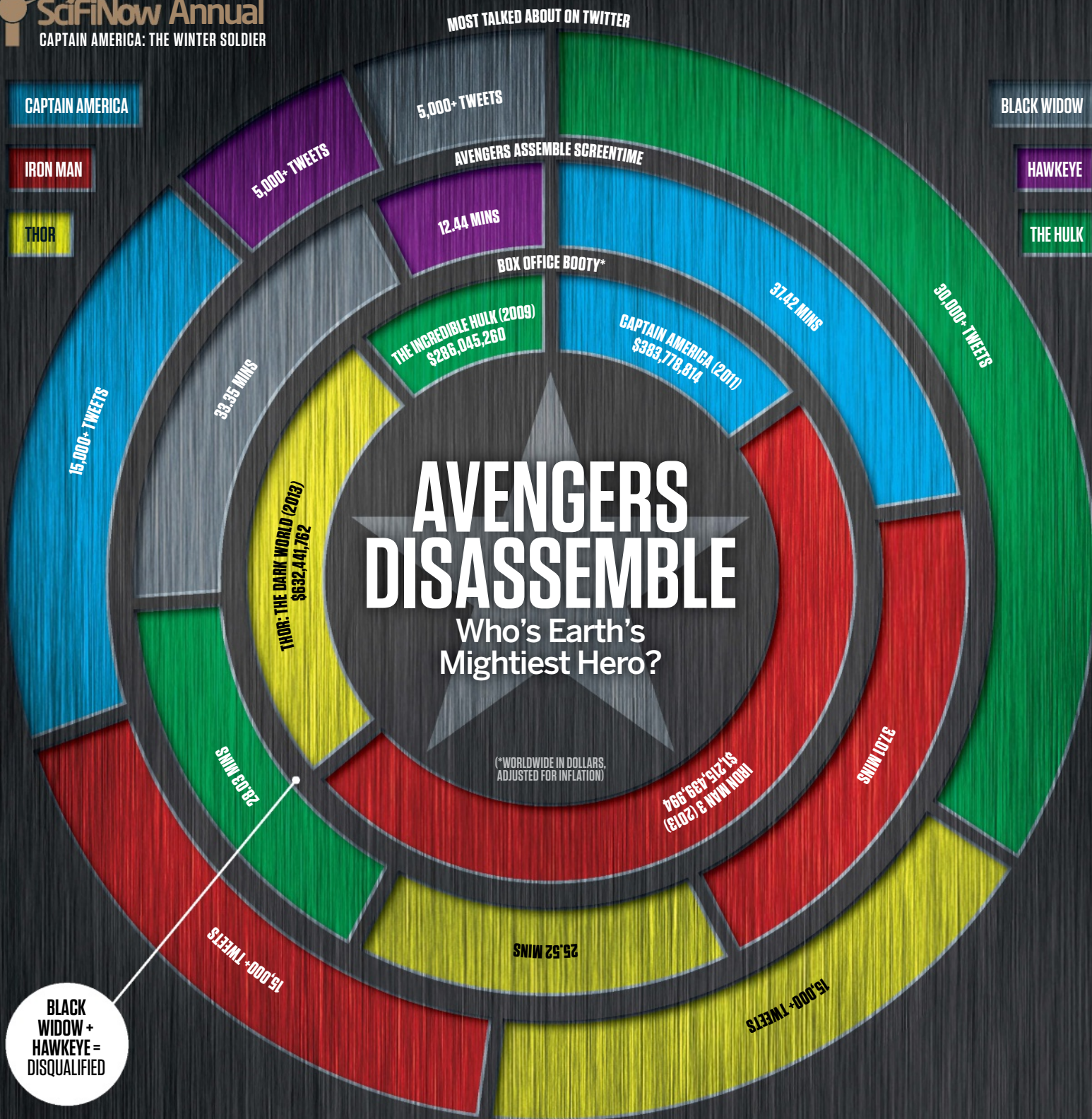
IRON MAN

THOR

BLACK WIDOW

HAWKEYE

THE HULK



➤ Anthony Russo, who co-directed the star-spangled sequel with his brother, Joe. “For us as filmmakers, we think it’s more satisfying when an audience goes to the theatre, they think they’re seeing a superhero movie, but when they get to the end of it they’re surprised with how much more content there is for them and thematically how much more interesting and challenging the movie is. That’s what we’re hoping to do.”

Aside from reintroducing Cap to a darker world, Brubaker’s arc also dared to bring back Steve Rogers’ World War II comrade James ‘Bucky’ Buchanan as the villainous Winter Soldier. Before then, the sidekick was buried in the same literary graveyard as Peter Parker’s Uncle Ben, seemingly untouchable, but his resurrection cleverly continued the emotional trauma Cap has been dealing with ever since he snapped out of suspended animation, decades after his plane hit the ice. Since the movie version of the character slept through the JFK assassination, Woodstock and Watergate, the moral dilemma will revolve around SHIELD.

“We’re living in a very complicated time,” continues Anthony. “Civil liberties are being called into question, drone technology is evolving, and we’re using pre-emptive technology to kill people who are potential threats. There are a lot of complicated moral questions facing citizens of democratic countries, and Cap, as a scion of America, would be challenged by these issues.”

“I LOVE ED BRUBAKER’S RUN AND I LOVE THE ULTIMATES, BECAUSE THEY BROUGHT A LITTLE BIT OF DIRT AND GRIT TO THE CHARACTER” ANTHONY RUSSO

THE UK TRAILER FOR *THE WINTER SOLDIER* REVEALED THAT THESE ARE THE COLD, UNCOMPROMISING TACTICS THAT SHIELD DEPLOYS – “NEUTRALISING THREATS BEFORE THEY EVEN HAPPEN” – AND IT DOESN’T SIT WELL WITH CAP. THAT’S SIMPLY NOT THE WORLD HE WENT OUT TO

fight for in 1941. In fact, it’s more like the one he went out to fight.

The super soldier’s cast-iron ideals are the reason he’s been paired with Scarlett Johansson’s no-nonsense Natasha Romanoff, aka Black Widow. They may be products of the same system, but the street-smart siren has no illusions about what SHIELD is up to, and she’s not above a few dirty tricks herself. Cap and Nat may share the soldier’s bond – the metaphorical band of brothers – but morally they’re different sides of the argument.

“They’re a wonderful pairing for that reason – they’re opposites,” says Anthony. “Cap is very grounded in the truth; she’s very fluid with the truth. Their personality types are so different, and what they stand for and believe in. To force these two together through ➤

Sebastian Stan reappears as assassin the Winter Soldier.



This time, *Avengers* accomplice Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) will join the fray.





Rest assured: there'll be plenty of good old-fashioned fisticuffs among the political intrigue.

➤ circumstances and make either of them trust or not trust one another is a fun dance to watch them do. Chris Evans and Scarlett Johansson have worked together several times, so they have a remarkable chemistry with one another. They're very intimate and knowing."

'Intimate' might be the key word, with rumours of a romance hounding the second movie. This would certainly put a fresh spin on the comic-book material, which has seen her hook up with Hawkeye, Daredevil and the Winter Soldier himself. But complicating matters of the heart is the hotly anticipated introduction of Agent 13, better known as Sharon Carter. In the comics, the pair share a passionate on-off relationship, but co-director Joe Russo says they're taking things slow for now.

"We introduce her as a *character* in this movie, but it's sort of a soft introduction. There's definitely the budding of [a romance], but it's something that's more left to future storytellers." Played by Emily VanCamp from TV's *Revenge*, Sharon is a relation of military pin-up Peggy Carter (Hayley Atwell), who was all set to become Steve's wartime sweetheart in the first film. In a deleted scene on the *Avengers Assemble* DVD and Blu-ray release, we learned that she is still alive – adding a whole new element to any future love triangle.

HIS LOST OPPORTUNITY FOR LOVE ISN'T THE ONLY THING HE'S MOURNING; THERE'S HIS DECEASED BARBERSHOP QUARTET AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, HIS BEST FRIEND BUCKY (SEBASTIAN STAN). IN *CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE FIRST AVENGER*, HE SEEMINGLY PERISHED

after falling from a moving train into an icy ravine. Just before that happens, though, the writers were already prepping for his return. When Cap comes to rescue his pal from the Red Skull and Nazi scientist Arnim Zola, he finds him strapped to a chair, having been tortured and probably subjected to all sorts of experiments. This is the more likely reason for his resurrection, as opposed to the comic-book storyline that saw the Soviets to blame for transforming him into a cyborg assassin. It won't be a happy reunion when the mask slips and Cap discovers he's been battling one of his closest allies, and herein lies the key to what makes Bucky the deadliest foe he's faced so far.

"We wanted to take a really grounded approach to the movie, and the Winter Soldier, even though he has a bionic arm, is in some ways a more grounded villain than the Red Skull is," says Anthony, which

CHRIS EVANS



Fantastic Four as Johnny Storm/Human Torch (2005, 2007)



TMNT as the voice of Casey Jones (2007)



Scott Pilgrim Vs The World as Lucas Lee (2010)



The Losers as Jensen (2010)



Captain America/Avengers Assemble as Steve Rogers/Captain America (2011, 2014)

SERIAL SUPERHEROES

These actors have suited up for more than one comic-book movie for some big-screen heroics

NICOLAS CAGE



Ghost Rider as Johnny Blaze/Ghost Rider (2007, 2011)

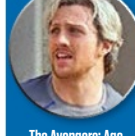


Kick-Ass as Damon Macready/Big Daddy (2010)

AARON TAYLOR-JOHNSON



Kick-Ass as Dave Lizewski/Kick-Ass (2010, 2013)



The Avengers: Age Of Ultron as Pietro Maximoff/Quicksilver (2015)

BEN AFFLECK

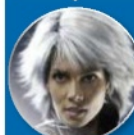


Daredevil as Matt Murdock/Daredevil (2003)



Batman Vs Superman as Bruce Wayne/Batman (2016)

HALLE BERRY



X-Men as Ororo Munroe/Storm (2000, 2003, 2006, 2014)



Catwoman as Patience Phillips (2004)

BRANDON ROUTH



Superman Returns as Clark Kent/Superman (2006)



Dylan Dog: Dead Of Night as Dylan Dog (2010)



Scott Pilgrim Vs The World as Todd Ingram (2010)

RYAN REYNOLDS



X-Men Origins: Wolverine as Wade Wilson/Deadpool (2009)



Green Lantern as Hal Jordan/Green Lantern (2011)



RIPD as Nick (2013)

JIM CARREY



The Mask as Stanley Ipkiss/The Mask (1994)



Batman Forever as Dr. Edward Nygma/Riddler (1995)



Kick-Ass 2 as Colonel Stars And Stripes (2013)

SAMUEL L JACKSON



The Spirit as Octopus (2008)



Assorted Marvel movies as Nick Fury (2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014)

RAY STEVENSON



Punisher: War Zone as Frank Castle (2008)



Thor as Volstagg (2011, 2013)

also explains why Bucky is one of the only baddies in the MCU with the skills to catch Cap's shield in mid-air.

"He's an enhanced human being like Cap, and their abilities match up against one another in a very similar way, which is what I think's brilliant about Brubaker's creation. We always say that a hero is only as good as the villain, and this villain in particular is a gift from a storytelling standpoint. He has such an emotional connection to the lead hero; they're basically brothers fighting each other, so you can't ask for a better or richer back story between a hero and a villain. For us, the relationship between Cap and the Winter Soldier is potentially more engaging than with Cap and the Red Skull."

Fighting in Cap's corner alongside Black Widow is his new ally, Sam Wilson (Anthony Mackie). He's a former military man working at the Veterans Association, counselling soldiers with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, but he also has a superhero alter ego of his own – the gravity-defying, winged Falcon.

"I think he starts to form a friendship with Falcon based on this sort of soldier code that he's not surrounded with anymore because he's working for SHIELD," explains Anthony. "The ethics and code of a spy agency are very different from the soldiering code he came from, and he gravitates towards Falcon, who has a similar background to him, so it's an interesting relationship."

In the movie, Wilson's counselling expertise enables him to deal with Cap's pent-up emotions, and in the process he becomes one of

the few people in this world that our hero can trust. "When Cap began his story, he lost everything," he continues. "Almost nobody has had that experience of losing every single person they know. He's 70 years down the road when he comes out of stasis, and Cap's finding that the world he left was really black and white, it was Allies versus the Nazis, and very clean in the sense of good versus bad. Then he goes away for 70 years – he misses Watergate, Vietnam and everything that's followed – so all of a sudden he comes face-to-face with a world that we've all been incrementally stepped to, the world that we know and interact with.

"Cap wasn't stepped to it; he was slammed into the modern world, and so he's going to have a stronger reaction to complexities that we're looking at than we are, because he's coming from a place that was much clearer and simpler. He's looking for grounding in the modern world in this movie, and he finds a common bond with Falcon because of his history as a soldier."

PTSD counselling is something that another of Earth's Mightiest Heroes could have benefitted from, as *Iron Man 3* saw Tony Stark losing his mettle and breaking down by the roadside. It was a clever way of acknowledging the cataclysmic events of New York while blithely ignoring the fact that the super-friends were no longer on standby to help bring down the Mandarin's terrorist plot. *Thor: The Dark World* managed to ➤

THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

What *Black Widow's* hair and neckline reveal about the plot. Cut... and action!

BETTY BARMAID

Iron Man 2 (2010)

Posing as Tony Stark's new assistant, Natasha Romanoff's look was engineered to make her opponents underestimate her. The plunging neckline and tightly sprung hair was holding her back, turning this super-skilled agent into a mere object of desire.

Rating: ★★★★★

BOLD AND BOUNCY

Avengers Assemble (2012)

The catsuit was redesigned to balance style and functionality. The zip was pulled up too, which simultaneously upped her cred as a superhero, while the shorter brighter hair-do shows she's poised for adventure.

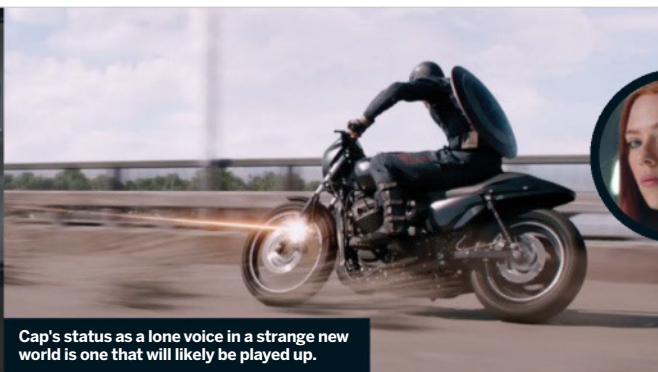
Rating: ★★★★★

SERIOUS BUSINESS

Captain America: The Winter Soldier (2014)

We can tell *Black Widow* is adopting Samuel L. Jackson levels of seriousness just by looking at her flat, lacklustre hairstyle. Let's face it, she'll never be the type to wear a polo neck, but this is as close as it gets. Expect drama.

Rating: ★★★★★



Cap's status as a lone voice in a strange new world is one that will likely be played up.

"CAP WAS SLAMMED INTO THE MODERN WORLD AND SO HE'S GOING TO HAVE A STRONGER REACTION TO ITS COMPLEXITIES THAN WE ARE" ANTHONY RUSSO



CAPTAIN ACCESSORISE

How Cap's costume has evolved over time



THE ULTIMATE OUTFIT

Captain America: The First Avenger (2011)

Steve Rogers looks every bit the super soldier in this Forties, *Ultimates*-inspired outfit. The design spared a thought for form and function, with a chinstrap and strategically placed pockets. It's grubby and robust, making us believe he could battle in the trenches with the best of them.

Rating: ★★★★★

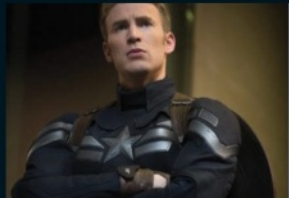


SILVER AGE INSPIRED

Avengers Assemble (2012)

This garish get-up was director Joss Whedon's vision of what Cap should look like, and it's the Silver Age come to life, but we think it looks more bobsleigh team onesie. The body-con midriff and arm panels are very slimming, making him look less physically imposing.

Rating: ★★★★★



SUPER SOLDIER

Captain America: The Winter Soldier (2014)

These days, Rogers is stepping out in understated togs that help him blend better with his 21st century environment. Harking back to the *Steve Rogers: Super Soldier* run, this combines the comic-book fidelity of the second costume with the functionality of the first outfit.

Rating: ★★★★★



Anthony Mackie will star as fellow agent Sam Wilson, aka the Falcon.



"TO FORCE CAPTAIN AMERICA AND BLACK WIDOW TOGETHER THROUGH CIRCUMSTANCES AND MAKE EITHER THEM TRUST OR NOT TRUST ONE ANOTHER IS A FUN DANCE TO WATCH THEM DO" ANTHONY RUSSO

➤ dodge the same problem by moving the action to Asgard and the Nine Realms, but Captain America is the first to deal with the post-*Avengers Assemble* world head-on.

THIS IS THE BIGGEST BRIDGE TO JOSS WHEDON'S *AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON*, COMING IN 2015, WHICH IS SOMETHING THE DIRECTORS WERE FORCED TO CONSIDER WHEN MAKING THIS MOVIE, SEEDING PLOT THREADS FOR FUTURE FILMS.

"I think part of our history in television equips us for that, because we're used to dealing with storylines that stretch over many years," says Joe Russo, whose CV includes cult-favourite TV series such as *Arrested Development*, *Community* and *Happy Endings*. It was one of the reasons the Russo brothers' appointment to direct this sequel raised a few eyebrows, that and the fact that they also brought us the generic comedy *You, Me And Dupree*, but the trailer soon silenced naysayers. Marvel has become known for their left-field creator and cast choices, and they haven't set a foot wrong yet.

"Kevin Feige, who runs Marvel, is a really brilliant producer, and he likes to strike a balance between keeping things connected to the larger universe, but at the same making sure everything has the freedom to play on its own," Joe adds.

"I really respected how he's done that; he really wants each movie to be what it wants to be with as little consideration as possible for what's being done in the other work. I think that's a great way for him to maximise the individuality of each project and explore the limits to where we can take the storytelling."

It seems that *The Winter Soldier* will be the first film to do the star-spangled Avenger justice, revealing a side to him we've never seen before. Whedon worked impossible magic with *Avengers Assemble*, but fans yearned to see a glimpse of the inspiring, evocative comic-book Captain America amid the jokes at his expense from Tony Stark.

We may be dealing with very modern threats, the product of a worldview shaped by half a century of global events, from the Cold War to 9/11 and well into the War on Terror, but at its heart, *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* will be instantly recognisable to fans of the comic. It's not about the cameos and the bad-guys; it's about cutting right to the core of who Captain America is.

"We're comic-book fanatics," declares Anthony. "I started collecting comics when I was ten-years old, and I have a massive comic-book collection sitting in my closet at home. I think one of the first books I ever bought was a Captain America/Falcon team-up story, so it's ironic and wonderful that we're sitting here doing an interview about a Captain America/Falcon movie 30 years later."

"When I was a kid I always imagined Cap as Steve McQueen, because he had a bit of texture to him. He'd flatten out to me when he was a bit of a boy scout, which is why I love Brubaker's run so much and I love *The Ultimates* – they brought a little bit of dirt and grit to the character, and that's what we hope to do with this film."

Captain America: The Winter Soldier is available on Blu-Ray from Marvel Studios.



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE WINTER SOLDIER

HAIL HYDRA! S.H.I.E.L.D. HAS INFILTRATED CAPTAIN AMERICA AND HIS COMRADES, CAN YOU SPOT THE 10 DIFFERENCES BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE?



ANSWERS:

LEFT TO RIGHT: NICK FURY'S EYEPATCH STRAP IS MISSING; BUCKY IS HOLDING LOKI'S SPEAR FROM AVENGERS ASSEMBLE; THE STAR ON BUCKY'S SHOULDER HAS CHANGED COLOUR; THE SHIP IN THE SKY IS NOW SPIDERMAN; THE KNUCKLE HOLES IN CAP'S GLOVES ARE GONE; THERE IS A MISSING SHIP IN THE SKY; ROBERT REDFORD IS ROBERT DOWNEY JR.; BLACK WIDOW'S RIGHT VENOM WRISTBAND IS GONE; THE BELT OF BLACK WIDOW'S OUTFIT IS MISSING THE X.

EVOLVE OR DIE

SUPERHERO MOVIES HAVE CHANGED, AND THE X-MEN ARE CHANGING WITH THEM. DIRECTOR **BRYAN SINGER**, WRITER/PRODUCER **SIMON KINBERG** AND THE STARS OF **X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST** TAKE US THROUGH THE NEXT STAGE IN SUPERHUMAN EVOLUTION...

AS NEW SPECIES ARE FORMED THROUGH NATURAL EVOLUTION, OTHERS WILL BECOME RARER AND RARER, AND FINALLY EXTINCT. THE FORMS WHICH stand in closest competition with those undergoing modification and improvement will naturally suffer most."

So wrote the father of evolution, 19th Century naturalist Charles Darwin. It's not for nothing that the quote sat neatly typed upon the frontispiece of a screenplay tweeted by *X-Men* director Bryan Singer.

The conflict between humans and the next stage of human evolution – mutants, super from birth, but not always heroes – is scoured deep into the *X-Men* canon. The first film opened with incredulous lawmakers discussing how to legislate their way around the thorny issue of

adamantium claws. Now, 14 years and four *X-Men* films (plus two *Wolverine* movies) later, and the issue is close to resolving itself courtesy of the Sentinels, mutant-hunting deathbots who have turned the near future into a bleak, battle-scarred dystopia.

Picking their way through the wasteland of 2024 are the scraps of mutant-kind, the remnants of the original X-Men last seen together in Brett Ratner's much-maligned *X-Men: The Last Stand*: Wolverine (Hugh Jackman), Professor X (Patrick Stewart), Storm (Halle Berry), Colossus (Daniel Cudmore), Iceman (Shawn Ashmore) and Kitty Pryde (Ellen Page), plus reformed arch-nemesis Magneto (Ian McKellen) and an all-new B-team of lesser-known superhumans. They're not

going to save the day, but they can save a day by propelling one of their number back through time to 1972 to stop or divert the Sentinel program masterminded by Bolivar Trask (Peter Dinklage) and unite mutantkind's opposing forces, the humanist – and depressed – Charles 'Professor X' Xavier (James McAvoy) and the absolutist – and imprisoned – Erik 'Magneto' Lehnsherr (Michael Fassbender), with Mystique (Jennifer Lawrence) trapped somewhere between their moral extremes.

It's not just mutants who need to adapt to survive, either. Bryan Singer and Sam Raimi kick-started the modern age of the superhero movie with 2000's *X-Men* and 2002's *Spider-Man*, but over a decade ➤

X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST



"MY NEXT GOAL IS HOW DID THE X-MEN COME TOGETHER? WE DON'T REALLY KNOW THAT YET, AND THAT STORY HASN'T BEEN TOLD"
BRYAN SINGER

It's quite possibly the biggest ensemble yet for a superhero movie.

➤ on, their legacy is an agenda seemingly dominated by the brash synergy of Disney's Marvel Studios and the Christopher Nolan-inspired orchestral superheroics of *Man Of Steel*, and audiences don't care about who came first – just who's best.

"I don't know if there's ever been another movie quite like it," reflects writer and producer Simon Kinberg. "In a way it's like two separate strands of the franchise, but in another way it's two separate franchises, because the tone of *First Class* and the acting talent of *First Class* is different from the look, feel and voice of the original *X-Men* movies."

"It also explores X-Men periods in a different way," adds director Singer. "One new element is that with *First Class* we could make a Silver Age-era Marvel movie, and now we're able to explore the Seventies with this movie and perhaps the Eighties with *Apocalypse* – it's really fun. The one thing we're doing that other people aren't is messing with history – I like to think we're complementing history and making it more exciting... well, *Captain America* did that, but we're doing it our way."

Based on a two-part *Uncanny X-Men* story arc by classic creative team Chris Claremont and John Byrne, 1980's 'Days Of Future Past' underpins much of the *X-Men* mythology. It has inspired animated adventures, ranging

from two 1993 episodes of *X-Men: The Animated Series* to a 2013 instalment of *Ultimate Spider-Man*, been revisited by countless comic-book storylines, and was even homaged in an episode of NBC's *Heroes*. It has cast a shadow over the *X-Men* movie universe for a long time too, with the robot Sentinels being considered as possible villains in almost every movie, while the storyline was being toyed with as the plot for *X-Men 4* before *The Last Stand* forced the franchise into shutdown.

SINGER IS RELIEVED HE WAITED. AFTER GRADUATING FROM XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS AND MOVING TO METROPOLIS TO WORK ON SUPERMAN

Returns, he dodged the deathblow of *The Last Stand* and took a back seat as producer on Matthew Vaughn's sleek and understated Sixties-set prequel, *X-Men: First Class*. As long games go, it's proven to be a doozy – either he's got the luck of Longshot or the prescience of Layla Miller, but that oft-tabled motion to bring Claremont and Byrne's time-travel epic to the big screen is a whole lot easier in 2014 than it would have been in 2006. No need for dodgy de-aging, a la *The Last Stand*'s teen Jean Grey flashback.

"Yeah, absolutely," agrees Singer. "It's a wonderful benefit, because not only have ➤



The dynamic between Charles Xavier and Magneto is one of the constants of the film series.

SAID IN TOOTH & CLAW

Hugh Jackman talks Wolverine, comics and time travel

Wolverine made an icon out of Hugh Jackman, and in return he made the X-Men's fan-favourite antihero the centrepiece of the series. On a high after the success of *The Wolverine*, Jackman is passing on the torch from the original cast to their fresh-faced period predecessors with *X-Men: Days Of Future Past*...

✕ Wolverine has been a big part of your life for so long. Are you constantly aware of his legacy?
For so many years I was grateful and taking it movie by movie. Somehow, with *The Wolverine* and now this, it's starting to dawn on me that it's been 15 years, and I'm starting to do re-units at my house on Saturday night – I'm just kidding. But no, it has dawned on me how lucky and blessed I am, and how much I love this character – he's sort of like a brother for me.

"I LOVE THIS CHARACTER, HE'S SORT OF LIKE A BROTHER FOR ME"
HUGH JACKMAN

✕ The Wolverine and Days Of Future Past go right back to the comics. Are audiences more at ease with the source material?
There's more confidence in the genre from studios, and I think creators like [Christopher] Nolan and Bryan Singer have shown that you can be true to the source material and still make a movie entertaining for those who have never read a comic-book in their life.

Something like *The Wolverine*, which was a smaller story, a more interior story, and the success of a movie like that thrills me because I'm proud of it, but it shows that we can focus on character, emotion, love, comedy – everything about that character, and that is what will keep people coming back.

✕ Does it surprise you that Logan always seems to have more to give as a character?

I keep going back to the comics for that reason, because there is so much inspiration there. I've enjoyed playing Wolverine more than ever, I think [James] Mangold as a director [of *The Wolverine*] pushed me to find different areas and places for him, different vulnerabilities, and it does surprise me that after seven movies I'm enjoying it more than ever. The scripts are getting better in every way – I'm finding it surprising and by no means boring.

✕ Was it strange stepping into the First Class-era cast?

I loved it. First of all, what an incredible group of actors they are. They have an incredibly strong bond as a group, so it was sort of weird for me and Bryan [Singer], the two of us had been shooting for six weeks [in the future setting], by the time they all came on we felt like we were the outsiders, which was interesting. They're a very strong group, and I loved those guys, I love how seriously they approach it and how much fun they have.

✕ Do you think Days Of Future Past is really taking the superhero movie forward?

Yes, because it's ambitious. If you go back to the DNA of the comic-book,

the reason people keep going back is the characters. If they're boring, they're not going to go back. They don't care how well it's drawn, the characters and the storylines they put in – they're one of the cool things you get in comic-books. It is based on one of the comic-books, but there's new characters and surprises, and the idea in movie terms of getting to see [Ian] McKellen and [Michael] Fassbender play the same role – there's so much meat on the bone for fans.

✕ After The Wolverine, Logan seems more at ease with himself. Did you talk much about how he changed between then and Days Of Future Past?

Yeah, he has come to peace with not being at peace, you know what I mean? He is a lot more comfortable with who he is, and he understands the mantle of being the Wolverine, and he is embracing that, but in the interim years – which isn't that long – the situation in the world has become fairly catastrophic fairly quickly that the problems of "What's my life?" and all of that have gone out the window.

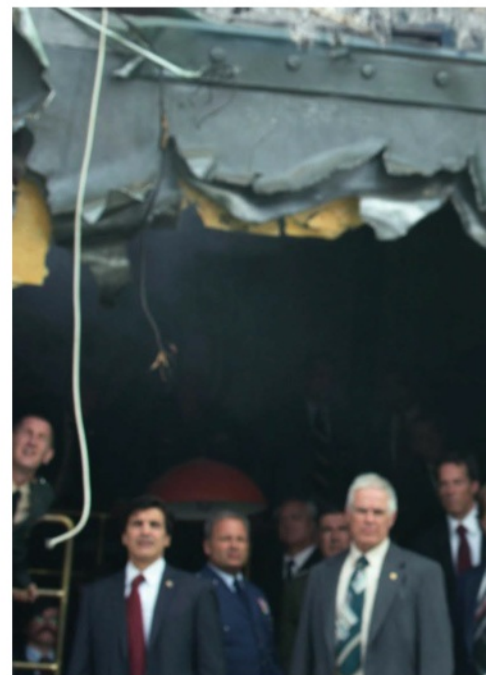
✕ Logan has made a lot of mistakes and seen a lot of tragedy. What does the idea of going back in time mean to him?
The larger mission is so great that it has to be a priority, but the temptation to revisit every mistake is great. I tried to either keep those things alive or see possibilities where he could try to right the wrongs. That's something we talked about, because he's particularly defined by the regrets in his life.

Also, one of the fun things about this is that while physically he's able to do the trip, he's in many ways the last person who should be doing it.



"IF YOU WANT TO GIVE ME ROBERT DOWNEY JR IN A METAL SUIT AND HAVE HIM JOIN THE X-MEN, THEN LET'S GO HEAD-TO-HEAD"
BRYAN SINGER

Mystique (Jennifer Lawrence) is caught between two moral sides.



How Erik's character arc will fit into the series as a whole remains to be seen.

MIND OVER MATTER

James McAvoy on breaking down Professor X

Charles Xavier isn't in a good place. After James McAvoy showed us a younger, brasher and more self-righteously assured Professor X in *First Class*, the events of the film cut him down as surely as that stray bullet in his spine. With the people closest to him – Magneto and Mystique – gone, James McAvoy reveals how this master telepath could keep dodging his destiny...

⊗ You get to do a lot of screaming in *Days Of Future Past*. Is it fun to have all the big drama?

My character was very different. There's a lot of new stuff to find in the character that we haven't seen before, but he wasn't very conflicted and didn't have any internal tension, but at the end of that movie he gets abandoned, basically. Physically he's debilitated really, and emotionally he is too. Coming into this movie, you have a lot of conflict, a lot of stuff to be figuring out and a lot of anguish to get through. To take the most balanced and together of the X-Men, as we've always seen him, the most self-possessed and the most sorted, to give him his nightmare, was really good.

⊗ Are you bringing in any elements of Patrick Stewart's Charles?

What I thought we might do is put you there for the second movie, then when we got the script I was actually really pleased that we hadn't – they'd

actually moved him further away from that. I think if we get to a third movie... it depends, they might want to stretch it out for another six movies, although that may be a bit much, I feel like by the end of the third movie I've got to start going there because that's sort of the deal we had with the audience when we started *First Class*. Like, "Right, I'm going to show them different, and isn't that interesting and fun?" But you have to respect where the character goes – unless they do something like changing the timeline, and now you've got a whole

"YOU HAVE TO RESPECT WHERE THE CHARACTER GOES – UNLESS THEY CHANGE THE TIMELINE"

JAMES MCAVOY

alternate reality, which sounds like crap get-out-clause movie-making, but it is also true of comic-books as well [laughs], where you've got alternate realities where one character's a good guy and one character's a bad guy.

⊗ How do you find that spin on such an established character?

If you could go back and talk to yourself 40 years ago, I don't know if you'd sit down and [not] think it was an entirely different person. For me, it was important that I remained very, very different. The one key element that they share, which

should always be present, is that they both share an incredible capacity for empathy and the imagination that allows you to really understand people. That has always been Charles' real power – his greatest attribute is his ability to put himself in somebody else's shoes and care. What's interesting about my character is that I get to challenge that empathy. He's fighting against that empathy and he wants to shut down, because it just hurts too much to care – to feel and truly understand, because not only can he now see other people and voyeuristically piggy-back on them telepathically, but he can now feel it, and it hurts.

⊗ How does working with Bryan Singer compare to Matthew Vaughn?

It was different and similar in lots of ways – different energy, but sometimes similar choices, arrived at through different meanings at times. They can both be quite bold with their choices and they can both make quite daring moves sometimes, so that was nice. Also, with Bryan he's the guy that's credited with rejuvenating the superhero genre with the first *X-Men*, and with showing that way that's become much more de rigueur – you can take it seriously. You felt you were in safe hands that knew the territory, and it allowed you at times to go a bit further, and I feel I went quite far with the character, because I was in a safe environment.



In the present, Magneto is still causing trouble.



QUICK AS YOU LIKE

American Horror Story's Evan Peters on Quicksilver

Your costume has received a drubbing online. Will people change their minds?

The pictures are taken out of context. You do forget that it's 1972, he's a teenager and he's kind of a punk before he becomes the grown Quicksilver. This is when he's a kid living in his parents' basement. So I think the costume fits well with what happens in the story, and people are going to be excited.

Is his relationship with Magneto and the X-Men as complex as in the comics?

You don't know if he's going to be good or bad – he's on that teetering point. He has a tendency to be excited by mischief and anarchy, so there's that side, but at this point he's not evil – he just likes breaking the law a bit.

We see your sister in the film. Is there a hint that she could be the Scarlet Witch?

I think we'll find out in future films. You get the feeling that all these characters are coming from the comic-book world and are tied together in the same way.

It must be strange not being the only Quicksilver, with Aaron Taylor-Johnson playing him in *Avengers: Age of Ultron*.

I'm excited to see Aaron's performance. It's such a cool character and such a cool superpower, so I'm excited to see both of them. I don't see any competition, because it's two different worlds. This takes place in the Seventies and he's a kid, so it's completely different. I'm definitely excited to be able to play the character, you know?



Daniel Cudmore returns as Colossus, alongside new face Blink (Bingbing Fan).

➤ some of these actors gone on to become huge stars in their own right, but also they're not familiar characters, so to go back and find a Magneto very different from where we left him in *First Class* and to be able to see characters from the future interact with those characters from the past is very exciting.

"If you don't know the characters, I ran a rough cut of the movie for a lot of people who'd never seen an *X-Men* film. I've tried to dig them up," the director laughs, "and it's a nice overview, they're not really lost; they understand what's going on. They may not know the specifics about certain characters, but they get the thrust of the story and they understand the stakes, because at its heart it's as much a time-travel movie as it is an *X-Men* movie."

INTO ALL THE SPACES WHERE SINGER WASN'T STEPPED KINBERG. WRITER ON THE LAST STAND, PRODUCER ON FIRST CLASS AND WRITER/PRODUCER ON BOTH DAYS OF FUTURE PAST

and its much-hyped 2016 follow-up *X-Men: Apocalypse*, he's now every bit Singer's – and long-term producer and superhero supremo Lauren Shuler Donner's – equal as a custodian of the *X-Men* universe. It's even rumoured that his role as producer/writer of Josh Trank's *The Fantastic Four* is so that 20th Century Fox can bring the first family into a Marvel Phase Two-style shared universe of their own.

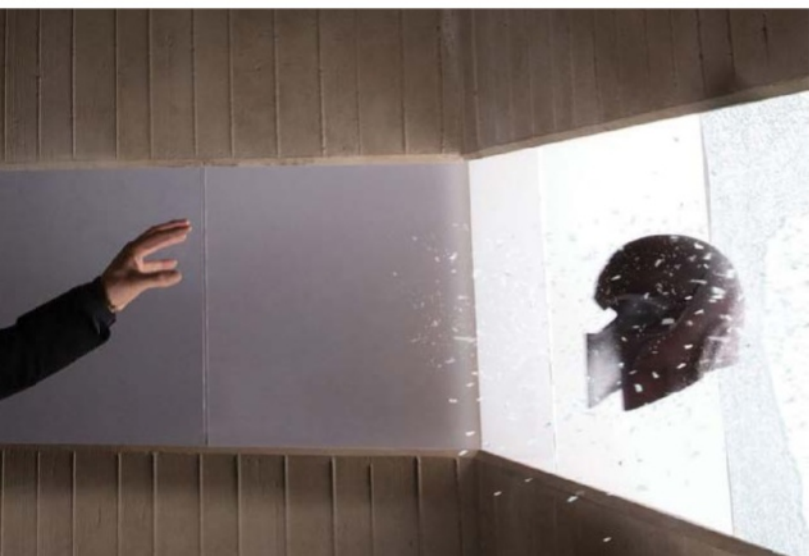
"We didn't have any idea when we were making *First Class* that we would be making *Days Of Future Past* and uniting the casts," Kinberg admits. "In our conversations we thought it would be interesting to bring Ian [McKellen] and Patrick [Stewart] back just as bookends to the movie, to start the movie like *Saving Private Ryan* or *Schindler's List* and call up logs with the older versions of the characters. That was our initial impulse;

it was just gonna bring them back for these omni-scenes, they weren't going to be integrated with the storytelling of the movie at all. Then, as we started talking about that, *Days Of Future Past* was always one of my favourite comics – that and 'Dark Phoenix' [another iconic Claremont and Byrne arc from 1976/7] were my two favourites. We screwed up 'Dark Phoenix' with *The Last Stand*, so this was an opportunity either to make amends for that or screw up another great run!

"I brought the idea of *Days Of Future Past* to Matthew [Vaughn, then set to return as director] and Bryan, who was the producer, and to the studio and everyone was daunted about what the physical reality of that would be. Even in calling up actors back together, not just in terms of their contracts but also in terms of their schedules, but everyone loved it conceptually and creatively. Then there's all kinds of challenges in telling a time-travel story with ten or 12 main characters, but the voice of this particular movie came to me very easily. Strangely – as you'll see – it's in some ways a combination of the grittiness and groundedness of Matthew's movie, of *First Class*, with the slightly bigger, glossier *X-Men* that Bryan created."

Although the comic-books have always exerted a pull on their movie spin-offs, it's over the last few years especially that links with the source material have been worn boldly on spandex sleeves. While the first three *X-Men* films kept their dot-shaded origins concealed beneath form-fitting leather, last year's *The Wolverine* – based on Chris Claremont and Frank Miller's ninja-filled 1982 miniseries – and this year's *Days Of Future Past* have it front and centre. Inevitably, this throws up its own obstacles.

"I say this – joking – with blood on my hands: with *X3* we wanted to tell the *Dark* ➤



➤ *Phoenix* story, and the movie got sidetracked so that the base story, which was the Phoenix story, became the B-story of that movie, and the mutant cure, which was inspired by one that Joss Whedon created called 'Gifted' [in *Astonishing X-Men*, with artist John Cassaday], became the core of the movie. Then *First Class*, to some extent was from a less famous comic arc [2008's *X-Men: First Class*, by Jeff Parker and Roger Cruz], and then when I presented people with *Days Of Future Past* it was, 'How do we stay as true as possible to the book?' Because it has its own separate challenges and demands, namely who's going to be sent back in time, because Kitty's consciousness being sent back 50 years would be a problem, because she wouldn't have been born yet."

IT WAS A SIMPLE QUESTION WITH A GREAT ANSWER: WOLVERINE. FAN-FAVOURITE HUGH JACKMAN HAD STEERED THE SURLY SCRAPPER THROUGH SOME OF THE LOWEST

ebbs in *X-Men* history – *The Last Stand* and *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* – without a dip in enthusiasm for the character. Arguably Marvel's last breakout household name since the Sixties (although another furry killer, Rocket Raccoon, may end up stealing that

crown by the year's end in *Guardians Of The Galaxy*), Wolverine was the ideal candidate to step into the past, following up on his foul-mouthed cameo in *First Class* by projecting himself back in time and into his old body – one of the perks of being an endlessly regenerating near-immortal.

"He's the guy coming here with the knowledge," explains Singer, "but he doesn't have the patience. Initially, the whole idea was for Charles Xavier to go back in time, but he couldn't do it – he physically couldn't make the trip – so the dynamic of these characters [is reversed]. Wolverine, who is usually the character that needs the most corraling, suddenly now he's put in the position of babysitter for these young characters who've reached the lowest of the low in their lives, and he's got to rally them together to do this mission. Of course, it all goes wrong, and then you wonder, is he gonna succeed or not?"

"It reminded me a lot of making *The Usual Suspects*, because in the first part of the movie I shot the future sequences with Hugh Jackman and the cast from the original films – a lot like when I was shooting *The Usual Suspects* with Kevin Spacey, Chazz Palminteri, Dan Hedaya, Giancarlo Esposito



Peter Dinklage takes on villain duties as Bolivar Trask.



The rise of Lawrence's star has brought her a more prominent role in the series.



COUNTDOWN TO APOCALYPSE

Bryan Singer, Hugh Jackman and Simon Kinberg on *X-Men: Apocalypse*

Granted near limitless power and lifespan due to his mutant ability to manipulate molecules, En Sabah Nur was born in Ancient Egypt and has controlled the evolution of mutants throughout history, particularly the X-Men. Whatever his role in *X-Men: Apocalypse*, it's going to cut deep...

3 IT'LL CARRY ON FROM DAYS OF FUTURE PAST

It's clear that however *Days Of Future Past* winds up, the timeline will be irrevocably altered for good, and the future we thought ourselves familiar with from the first three movies could easily unfold differently. "In a way, it feels like from this point forward we can do whatever we want," reveals Simon Kinberg, "but we'll be moving forward with some of the actors from the *First Class*/*Days Of Future Past* cast, so there's stuff we've done in these last couple of movies that we'll definitely continue doing for them, at least in *Apocalypse*, if not more movies going forward."

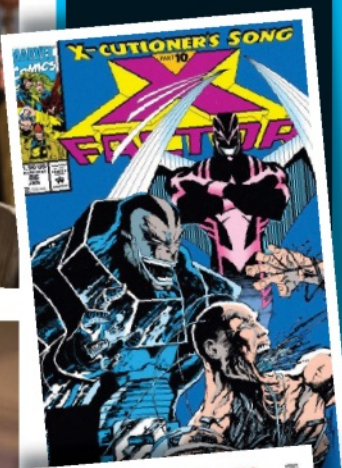
2 IT COULD UNDO X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE

With Vietnam at the backdrop of *Days Of Future Past*, Logan should be somewhere else – getting inducted into Team X and making the life choices that get him his adamantium bones and cost him his memories. "This has all been thought through, trust me," says Hugh Jackman. "I'm trying to answer this without giving too much away – there's a really exciting set of possibilities about what is proposed by having him go back, but it is thought out in terms of how this plays into *X-Men*, so in a way you can see many different possibilities, and in a way it will completely make sense."

1 CYCLOPS, JEAN GREY AND STORM ARE BACK

Apocalypse will wind the clock so far forward that it takes on a neon glow: the Eighties. "My next goal is how did the X-Men come together? That story hasn't been told yet, so [*Days Of Future Past*] is the inbetweenquel," laughs Singer. "It's in between the birth of that relationship with Charles and Erik and the formation of the X-Men."

Of course, this means *Apocalypse* is in the right time zone to revisit and recast iconic original characters Cyclops, Jean Grey and Storm. "Yeah," Singer confirms when that question is put to him, "exactly."





"WE SCREWED UP DARK PHOENIX WITH X3, SO THIS WAS AN OPPORTUNITY EITHER TO MAKE AMENDS FOR THAT OR SCREW UP ANOTHER GREAT COMIC" SIMON KINDERG



Nicholas Hoult dons the blue fur again as Beast.



Sunspot (Adan Canto) joins the returning Kitty Pryde (Ellen Page), Iceman (Shawn Ashmore) and Colossus.

and all those people. Then suddenly they all left and we started a new movie with James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender, Jennifer Lawrence and Nicholas Hoult, which we shot for months and months, and I still carried over Hugh Jackman as I had carried over Kevin Spacey when we joined the Suspects in that movie."

IN EMBARKING ON NOT ONLY THE MOST AMBITIOUS X-MEN FILM TO DATE, BUT PERHAPS EVEN ONE OF THE MOST AMBITIOUS SUPERHEROES FILMS TO DATE (AT LEAST UNTIL

Warner Bros gets *Justice League* going) *X-Men: Days Of Future Past* has ridden a rollercoaster of reactions with the perceived complexity of the storyline, and the tidal wave of new mutants forced an acid-reflux of doubt and derision. It's well-founded to a point, as joining the *First Class* cast in the Vietnam War backdrop of 1972 are a younger incarnation of Toad (Evan Jonigkeit) and super-speedy Quicksilver (Evan Peters), while the already bloated future team gets blazing-hot Sunspot (Adan Canto), portal-chucking Blink (Fan Bingbing), hunter/tracker Warpath (Booboo Stewart) and the energy-slinging badass Bishop (Omar Sy).

The *X-Men* franchise has evolved, and whether it'll reflect the dreams of Professor X or the fears of Magneto – co-existence in the movie landscape, or brutal extermination – remains to be seen, but there's no getting away from Marvel Studios. Kevin Feige's predecessors fired off the film rights to the likes of the *X-Men* and *Spider-Man* long before Disney bought the company and gave it the means to realise its blockbuster potential in-house. Criticisms of *Days Of Future Past*'s scale and cast – and predictions of failure – aren't happening in a vacuum; they're as much informed by the partisan nature of fandom as they are by memories of Juggernaut running after Juno in *The Last Stand*. Feige has made no secret of wanting the *X-Men* back at Marvel Studios, and he's got a choir of voices clamouring for that across social networks.

X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST

"It's not healthy for us," asserts Singer. "I'll tell you why: they're both comic-books, and at some point you can expand the universes, that's where the comparison ends. It sounds defensive, and it is defensive, but only because people make comparisons between this and *The Avengers*, which is ludicrous.

"The Avengers is a mash-up of massive single character franchises of incredibly familiar characters and Iron Man. And did I mention Iron Man? Oh, and *by the way* – Iron Man.

"They are huge, colossal franchises that are peppered with all these other characters that are again, extremely famous, and so yes, Fox will at some point synergise these characters, and that process is slowly beginning, but it's very different to taking movies that gross close to \$1 billion and then pushing them together into these giant, broad movies. If you want to give me Robert Downey Jr in a metal suit and have him join the *X-Men*, then yes, let's go head-to-head.

"That being said, this is quite a big movie, and we do have a lot of major factors, and I think we'll do quite well," he adds, "but it's a very different thing. *Avengers* and the Marvel movies are individual franchises based on major characters, that's why there are some Marvel characters in *Avengers* that don't have their own movie, because I don't know if they had their own movie anyone would be that interested.

"We're the bastard stepchild of the comic-book universe, you can go to my mom and she knows who Captain America is, but you try and explain to her who Deadpool is? She doesn't even know the Hulk – 'You know, the Hulk! Green! Big guy!' – so... Gambit? It'll have to be a different process. It's doable, but it's not any way comparable."

The next stage in superhuman evolution may have arrived, but the fight for survival is by no means over.

X-Men: Days Of Future Past is available on Blu-Ray.



AN UNEXPECTED BOX-OFFICE TRIUMPH, 2011'S RISE OF THE PLANET OF THE APES REINVIGORATED THE MYTH, NOT WITH THE THUNDER OF TIM BURTON'S FAILED REBOOT, BUT WITH INTELLIGENCE AND EMPATHY. WE SPEAK TO THE CREATORS OF DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES TO DISCOVER HOW THEY TURNED A SLEEPER HIT INTO A FULL-BLOWN FRANCHISE...

GORILLA!

WARFARE

“I THINK IT’S AN EPIC STORY. IT’S LIKE THE GODFATHER WITH APES. IT’S A MYTHIC, GRAND, FAMILY STORY.”

SUCH IS THE MUSING OF *DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES* DIRECTOR MATT REEVES, WHO FOUND HIMSELF DRAWN TO THE PROJECT THROUGH A COMBINATION OF HIS FASCINATION WITH THIS PARTICULAR “FAMILY story” and a self-proclaimed obsession with all things Apes. “What this reimagining of the franchise has done,” he says of the new series of films that began in 2011 with *Rise Of The Planet Of The Apes*, “is get into the emotional life of the apes. I find that so exciting, and for me one of the reasons it was so exciting is that in the interim between watching *Rise* and preparing to come in and talk to them about this film, I’d had a son and I just suddenly saw, in Caesar, my son.”

He saw that there was an inherent intelligence there; an understanding of so much going on around him, but at the same time an inability to put any of that into words.

“There was something about that that I found so exciting and so compelling,” he explains, “and there are other moments when he would act in the most instinctual and impulsive way, and it would remind me that we are animals. And that’s the great thing about the *Planet Of The Apes* franchise – the big thing about ➤

APES ON HORSEBACK!

The story behind Dawn's biggest fan-pleasing story element

One of the coolest elements that came out in the trailers for *Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes* was the reveal of Caesar and other apes on horseback – a direct reference to the original *Planet Of The Apes*, in which the first shot audiences were given of apes was gorillas on horseback.

"That was all Matt Reeves," enthuses producer Dylan Clark. "I remember when we were in that location and looking at these giant doors – this was a walkthrough of the sets. Matt put his hands up, spread them apart and made this noise [whinnying] as the doors were opening, and then he pointed and said, 'Apes! Apes on fucking horses! Can you see it?' And the idea was awesome."

Adds a gleeful Reeves, "We didn't have the normal amount of prep time you'd have for a movie of this scale, so I barely did any pre-viz. There was no time for it. But we had that set, and I was literally working with [screenwriter] Mark Bombback to reconceive that sequence from the original where the apes show up. We were on set and I said, 'God, wouldn't it be great if you saw Jason Clarke and Gary Oldman seeing the apes from above and below? If we could just have the huge doors open and there are the apes on horseback just waiting for them.' I said, 'Sounds like a trailer, doesn't it?' And they used it as a trailer moment!"

Which just added to the surreal nature of this whole project for him. "I remember when I was doing this," Reeves states, "and JJ Abrams was getting ready to do *Star Wars*. We basically said that if anybody ever told us when we were kids – we met when we were 13 and used to make 8mm movies together – that one day he would be making a *Star Wars* film and I would be making a *Planet Of The Apes* film, I think our heads would have exploded."



The apes on horseback provides a nod to the iconic original film.



the metaphor – is that it's supposed to be 'what if the animals took over?' But we are animals. Seeing what Andy Serkis did as Caesar and the way that Weta realised him, and connecting that to my son, made this whole experience connect with me on a very personal level. Seeing that child come into being – that's what I was interested in seeing in the apes."

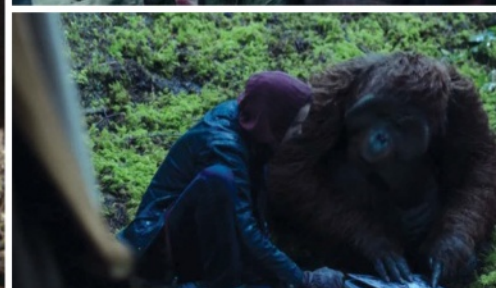
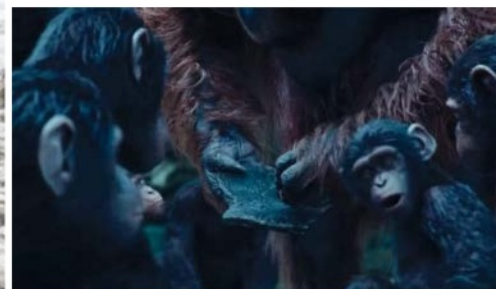
For producer Dylan Clark, a guiding force behind the relaunched franchise from the beginning, the films are also symbolic of the very real fact that the world is coming down around us and that we are, in essence, the instigators of our own demise.

"I remember when we were making *Rise*," says Clark, "[director] Rupert Wyatt and I were in some airport, and it was right during the BP oil spill in the Gulf, and I said that what was amazing to me is that these arseholes can find out exactly from an engineering and technical standpoint how to put pipes all the way down there and drill into oil, yet they don't have a mechanism to turn it off. That is mankind right there, and that's what

DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES



Jason Clarke plays Malcolm, the leader of the surviving humans.



fed into *Rise*. We liked the idea of some scientist pushing a virus this way to try to eradicate Alzheimer's. I get that that's something scientists would do if they could, but of course, in this case they push the genie so far out of the bottle that they can't put it back in. Like I said, that's mankind, and that's why these movies work."

In *Dawn*, which takes place a decade after the events of the first film, Caesar (Andy Serkis) had led his fellow apes into something of an idyllic existence, as they've been building their society from the ground up. Believing that humanity has been wiped out by the aforementioned virus, they are stunned to discover a band of human survivors (played by, among others, Gary Oldman, Jason Clarke, Keri Russell and Kodi Smit-McPhee). A fragile peace is reached between them, but it proves to be short-lived as both sides are brought to the brink of a war that, according to the studio, "will determine who will emerge as Earth's dominant species." The answer to that one is fairly obvious.

"THE LAST FILM WAS ABOUT CAESAR BECOMING A LEADER, AND THIS FILM IS ABOUT HIM COMING TO GRIPS WITH EXACTLY HOW TO BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE LEADER HE CAN BE"
MARK BOMBACK

WHEN DAWN WAS PUT INTO DEVELOPMENT, IT WAS EXPECTED THAT WYATT WOULD BE RETURNING AS DIRECTOR, AND THAT RICK JAFFA AND

Amanda Silver from *Rise* would be scripting. Indeed, the process started that way, but changed relatively quickly, largely because of the speed at which Fox wanted the film in theatres. At about the same time that Reeves was brought aboard, he was joined by writer Mark Bomback, who explains that early on the script had much more of a focus on the human characters. While he understood the rationale of such an approach, he didn't necessarily agree with it.

"A viral apocalypse is such a traumatic thing that the instinct is to have empathy with the survivors and invest yourself very fully in their story," Bomback proposes, "and then the apes became a problem they were contending with. That's how the first drafts were going. Matt's take, which for me was a revelation, said, 'No, it should be the apes' story, and the humans are the problems that the apes are contending with.' And what we really ended up with is that it's both of their

stories, which each one is providing not necessarily an antagonist, but a dilemma for the other side to deal with. In repositioning the storyline to an ape point of view, it did two things. One, it made it fresh and original and unlike anything that preceded it, and two, it capitalised on how tremendously effective the Caesar plot was in *Rise*. Everyone who is a fan of that film, at least in my experience, got most excited in those moments where you saw Caesar become a leader, and really sort of being the catalyst for everything that's going to unfold in the world of the planet of the apes. And rather than having him just be a character in the story, let's continue on Caesar's journey.

"As a result," he elaborates, "everything in the story is in relation to what's happening for Caesar. In the last film it was about Caesar becoming a leader, and in this film it's about him coming to grips with exactly how to be the most effective leader he can be. He has a huge sense of responsibility towards these apes; they are his family now, and he has, in a sense, led them out of captivity and into the wilderness. All



"IT'S LIKE 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, ONLY INSTEAD OF SEEING THE DAWN OF MAN, WE'RE SEEING THE DAWN OF APES"

DYLAN CLARK

YOU MANIACS! YOU BLEW IT UP!

What iconic monuments have been bashed in by sci-fi?

STATUE OF LIBERTY

Location: New York, USA
Built: 1886
Destroyed in: Planet Of The Apes (1968), Ghostbusters (1984), Superman IV: The Quest For Peace (1987), Independence Day (1996), Deep Impact (1998), A Man Called Hero (1999), Cloverfield (2008), Oblivion (2013)

BIG BEN

Location: London, United Kingdom
Built: 1859
Destroyed in: Gorgo (1961), Independence Day (1996), The Avengers (1998), Reign of Fire (2002), The Day After Tomorrow (2004), V For Vendetta (2005), GI Joe: Retaliation (2013)

EFFEL TOWER

Location: Paris, France
Built: 1889
Destroyed in: The War Of The Worlds (1953), Independence Day (1996), Mars Attacks! (1996), Armageddon (1998), GI Joe: The Rise Of Cobra (2009)

BROOKLYN BRIDGE

Location: New York, USA
Built: 1883
Destroyed in: Godzilla (1998), Deep Impact (1998), I Am Legend (2007), Cloverfield (2008), The Dark Knight Rises (2012)

THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT

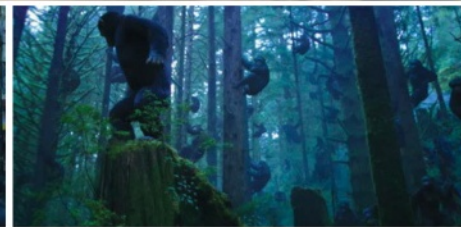
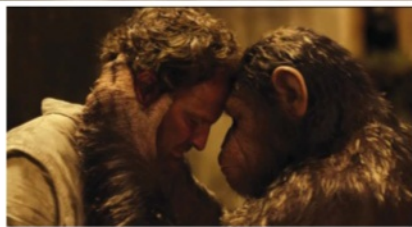
Location: Washington, DC, USA
Built: 1885
Destroyed in: Earth Vs the Flying Saucers (1956), Superman II (1980), Mars Attacks! (1996), 2012 (2012)

MOUNT RUSHMORE

Location: Mount Rushmore, South Dakota
Built: 1941
Destroyed in: Superman II (1980), Mars Attacks! (1996)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Location: Washington, DC, USA
Built: 1800
Destroyed in: Independence Day (1996), 2012 (2012)



➤ he wants to do is deliver on the promise he's made to them: to give them a society that's worthy of, for lack of a better word, their new species. They're not simply apes; they're this new generation of apes that have a human communication to them that had never existed on the planet before, so the question, really, is what is the best way for that society to thrive? All of which falls on Caesar."

Clark describes the society as a kingdom, and this film as having an ape point of view, largely because Caesar and his people have no idea initially that any humans have survived the virus. "Their society," he explains, "is a majestic place, and it's working. It's pushing forward with the growth of a new civilisation.

There's architecture, there's design, there's creativity. Caesar has created a home, and it's beautiful because we know that – emotionally – it's been earned. We know what they've been through. And Caesar is the great patriarch, but of course, this is a movie where conflicts occur; where humans and apes are forced to deal with each other. And thus begins a really hard journey for Caesar to navigate, because humans can't be trusted completely."

Feeling a need to ignore the fact that audiences would be aware that there were humans in the film from its marketing, Reeves wanted to begin *Dawn* with the notion that this was a world with apes as the dominant species, and that there were no humans.

"In the beginning, we watch them in their tribal phase," he reveals. "It's like *2001: A Space Odyssey*, only instead of seeing the dawn of man, we're seeing the dawn of apes. I just thought that would be incredibly exciting. It would also be terrifying to watch because they're so primal, but then we get into their souls and start to connect to them

emotionally. And then you realise what's at stake: this world that matters to them, these relationships that matter. That Caesar is not only a patriarch and father to the apes, but he's literally a father. He's got a son, a wife, and all of the things that matter to all of us. Then we realise that there are some humans left, and it's a question of survival. I thought that this was the moment where you could explore whether or not – and we know it doesn't work out in the end – this could have been a planet of humans and apes if they could find a way to live together; where tolerance could have worked out. What's going to undo that?

"I thought that would be a great story, a grand, epic Western where the question of violence lives under every scene, but at the same time it's got heart. In that sense, it's not about, 'Here are the apes, let's destroy them,' or 'Here are the humans, let's go destroy them.' It's like, 'Hey, we're both trying to survive. Can we do that together, or does one have to destroy the other in order to survive?' It's like we're on a razor's edge, and the stakes on both sides are very emotional."

Whether ape or human, it was important, explains Bomback, that there be a sense of reality and society (to whatever degree is possible) for each.

"In this film, you're still in the experience with Caesar, but now also this much ➤



NATURAL BEAUTY

Production designer James Chinlund on building a world without man

What drew you to the project?

As a production designer, I am most excited about the opportunity to enter a world I have never experienced before and explore its rules and mechanics. When I travel for work, I have this opportunity in a practical way of going into a new city, meeting the people who live there and seeing how their world functions. This translates to the visual side of my job as well in that each film requires its own set of rules that define the world visually.

Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes was simply an incredible opportunity to define a world no one has ever seen before, to think like an ape and extrapolate how they would define their burgeoning civilisation, setting the launching point for a new world. It's one of the most unique opportunities I can imagine!

From a production design point of view, *Rise* was pretty much set in our real world. What did the ten-year leap forward in time afford you in terms of design?

Since we last saw the world in *Rise*, Earth has gone through a tremendous transformation. The idea that humans have been almost entirely eliminated from the planet allowed us to explore what might happen if the Earth was allowed time to heal itself. Our research led us to realise that the natural world would quite quickly start attacking the constructions of man and degrading them: streets paved in plant life, wildlife moving back into the cities, etc.

I was super-excited about the visual potential of these ideas and being able to represent a human world being erased by nature as the apes began the process of carving out their own world within it.

What were the nature of the creative conversations between you and Matt Reeves?

Matt came at the film with the most ferocious intensity, and was such an inspiring energy for me to be around. From our very first moments of conversation, it was clear that we were locked in the pursuit of an epic yet entirely grounded look at the world through the eyes of the apes. We wanted every stitch of film to feel plausible and based on a logic that seamlessly wove itself through the fabric of the movie.

Narratively and in the construction of the story, Matt was relentless in bringing a 'humanity' to the apes, a complete representation of their emotional life and the structures that defined their civilisation. This challenged me to meet his effort in the visual construction of their world, really assuming the mind of the apes and trying to define their world in a truthful and grounded way.

Hopefully, we have created an epic representation of a world at the tipping point, being handed back to nature at the end of the reign of man – a visual representation of the end of the world as we know it and the birth of a new civilisation.



WHERE NEXT FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES?

Writer Mark Bomback teases the third film in the franchise

On some level, throughout the production of *Rise* and *Dawn* – and no doubt it will continue with 2016's third entry – there has been the feeling on the part of the filmmakers that these movies will inevitably lead to the world of 1968's *Planet Of The Apes*. Not in terms of story, but in the ultimate disposition of apes and humans on the food chain.

"We're trying to get back to the franchise a little bit more in tone," says writer Mark Bomback, "and it's tricky. In some ways, in *Dawn* we left the immediately recognisable presence of the last film, and now we are in this sort of alternate future. Even though it's the immediate future, that landscape lends itself a little more easily to the spectacle of the franchise.

"What we're trying to do – and it remains to be seen if we're successful – is find our way back to the world of the 1968 film, not necessarily in its specifics, but in the notion that the apes will evolve to that state of culture and that humans will be subject to them. So in this film we were very conscious of that type of iconography. The trick, which I think we were successful at, is making it feel relatable to the *Planet Of The Apes* that everyone knows, but also to the film that just preceded it.

"It feels like a logical and organic extension of what was going on, but at the same time it doesn't feel like too big of a leap to get to that place. On the flipside, you start to have a sense of where they're going to wind up."

"CAESAR HAS CREATED A HOME, AND IT'S BEAUTIFUL BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT – EMOTIONALLY – IT'S BEEN EARNED" DYLAN CLARK

➤ larger group that we introduced in the last film, like Rocket, Maurice and Koba – who, next to Caesar, is probably the most interesting character in the film. He's certainly the most complex next to Caesar, if not as complex."

As originally developed in the early days of *Dawn*, there would have been something of a civil war brewing between the apes, with Caesar on one side and Koba on the other. Ultimately, that idea was jettisoned in favour of something else that the filmmakers thought would have more resonance.

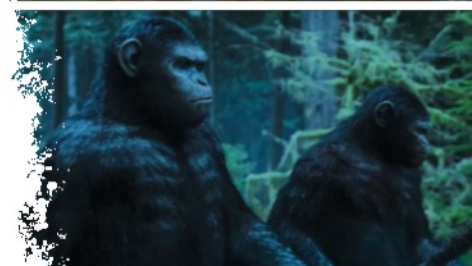
"When we meet Caesar and Koba in this film, one of the surprises is they've become almost like brothers," says Bomback. "Which, if you're making any assumptions about Koba's personality, you'll be surprised by. What I think their brotherhood up to this point of the films shows is just how brilliant a leader Caesar has been. He could take someone like Koba, who was clearly damaged in *Rise*, and take great strides in repairing his psychology by giving him this ape community. So ideally, their brotherhood will be a testimony to Caesar's effectiveness as a leader when the film begins. I mean, there is a way to tell a story where you sort of go to the immediate place that the last film took you, but when we're moving forward ten years a lot of things can happen.

"To me as a filmgoer," he adds, "I love those kinds of surprises where the assumptions I make about certain characters are upended right out of the gate. And I think the most successful TV series are doing this as well, where you'll enter a new season and be very surprised how characters have evolved since the last time you've seen them. Think about everyone's life – a lot can happen in a year, so in ten years there are a lot of things that are happening, and part of the fun of entering *Dawn* is that guessing

game of what we are going to learn about how things have evolved. I think the way Matt divulges that information in the first 10 or 15 minutes of the film is spectacular. There are a lot of little steps in walking you through just how much it has changed for the apes, and I think it's totally immersive. For me personally, one movie that was in my head when I began working on it was *Apocalypse Now*, where it was so immersive and it's a brand new culture that you find yourself understanding in a way that's gratifying, because you would assume it would be foreign to you. I hope a similar experience is in the beginning of *Dawn*, where you are immersed in the ape society, and again, step by step you start to realise how specific, unique and ape-centric a world they've built for themselves."

COMING INTO THAT WORLD, OF COURSE, ARE THE AFOREMENTIONED HUMAN SURVIVORS. JASON CLARKE'S MALCOLM HAS A BACKGROUND IN ENGINEERING AND architecture from his time when he was a citizen of a normal world. Alongside him is Gary Oldman's Dreyfus, a former chief of police in San Francisco.

"The two of them," Bomback observes, "have managed to co-found a community of survivors after years and years of terrible strife and all sorts of horrific breakdowns in terms of human society. So in a sense there's a mirroring going on in terms of Caesar and his allies and how Dreyfus and Malcolm rely on each other. Malcolm is romantically involved with Ellie, played by Keri Russell, who was a nurse who was very active with the CDC when the virus first broke out.



By the point, the apes have their own functioning society.

DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES

Dawn chronicles Caesar's rise as leader of the apes.

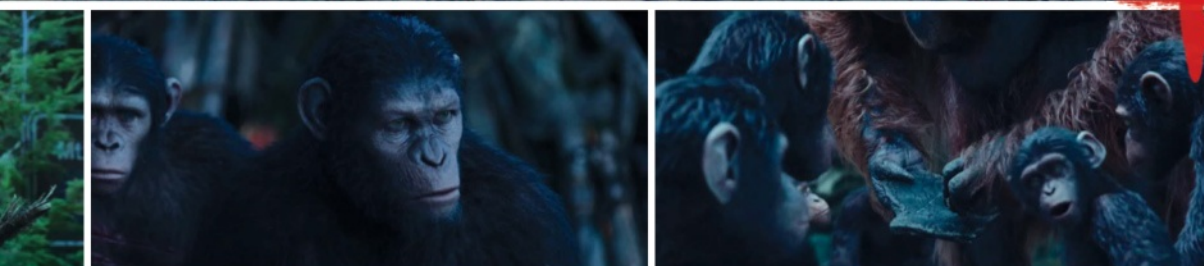
THE DAWN THAT NEVER ROSE

Matt Reeves reveals the Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes we could have seen

As originally conceived, *Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes* was going to feature the ape society evolved far beyond where it had been at the conclusion of *Rise*.

"I'm not sure what the original timeframe was," says Matt Reeves, "but the apes' level of articulation was incredibly advanced. It was a lot more in the spirit of where things get to if you were imagining this would lead, in some kind of weird parallel way, back to the 1968 film. It wasn't quite that far, but pretty far along. They were pretty eloquent. I wanted them to be eloquent in instinctual expression, but not in their verbal abilities.

"What I loved about that first movie was watching Andy Serkis as Caesar think, putting things together, feeling the emotion welling within him and him trying to find a way to deal with it all. I think the idea of skipping all of that is to miss what is delicious about it. We all know where it ends up – it becomes *Planet Of The Apes* – so then the journey is how do we get there? That's what I was interested in; it was like, 'Guys, take your time with it,' and they were on board with that, thankfully."



Malcolm has a child named Alexander from his wife, who is long dead, and there's the notion that Alexander is the thing that's allowed Malcolm to regain his sanity through the viral apocalypse. He became the thing Malcolm was doing this for – to create a future for his son, who witnessed one of the worst things imaginable: the virus that took his mother and everyone else. So there's a lot of reliance on the people you trust and love to forge ahead and make a new civilisation on both sides."

When each side becomes aware of the other, the age-old question emerges: is this world big enough for the both of them? Moreover, to what extent do old suspicions, prejudices and deep-seated animosities on both sides guide them?

"Don't forget," points out the writer, "the humans blame the apes for the fact that they lost everyone. All they know is that a band of apes escaped and suddenly everyone started to die. So there's a real deep level of mistrust on both sides; the view that the other is an immediate threat to their survival, and really, both sides are existing with the mindset that

survival is paramount. There is nothing more important than survival, and they will stop at nothing."

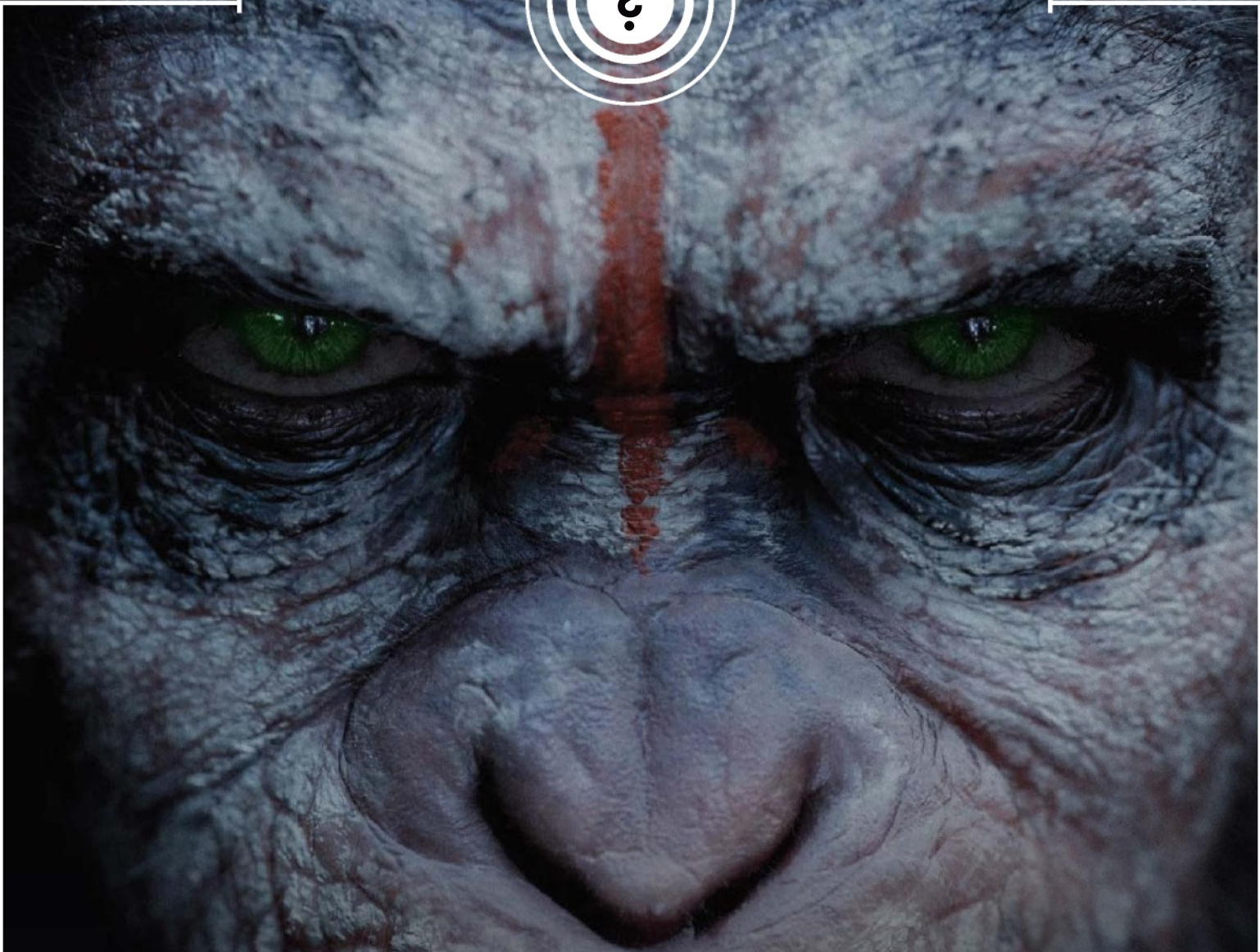
For Reeves, one of his intentions for the film was to imbue it with a sense of optimism, despite the fatalism that has been an earmark of this series since the day Charlton Heston's George Taylor collapsed before the remains of the Statue of Liberty at the conclusion of the 1968 original.

"One of the central questions of the story is 'Can we avoid violence?'" he says. "The thing is, we have to fight against violence – against that part of our nature – but at the same time it is a part of our nature. That battle is always going to be an ebb and flow. There's this doomed aspect of things that live under all of the *Planet Of The Apes* movies. There's also this kind of very poignant and powerful will to fight against that sort of fatalism: the idea that we can somehow rise above that. There are some moments in this movie where you see the connection between humans and apes, and it becomes very poignant, because you see ways where it could work. That's what makes the story

emotional, because if you didn't have that, it would just be relentlessly grim, and you would just indulge in either the destruction of the humans or the apes. I thought the story is so resonant and powerful in that it really only works when you see the connection as well as the disconnection. That sense of doom lives under everything, but at the same time there's also this sense of yearning for it to work.

"This is going to sound very lofty," Reeves concludes with a laugh, "but when you think of three-act structure with a beginning, middle and end, the reason it resonates with us is that our lives are a beginning, middle and an end. The redemption comes through moments of meaningfulness, for the moments of connection. Our film's trajectory is towards the original *Planet Of The Apes*, but along the way it's about the connections that are made, the relationships that matter and the things that are worth fighting for, even in the face of destruction."

Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes will be released on Blu-Ray on 24 November.



DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES QUIZ: TRUE OR FALSE?

TAKE ON THE APES AT THEIR OWN GAME IN THIS TRYING TEST OF TRIVIA

- ❶ Caesar's son is called Ash.

❷ *The Weight* by The Band is the song playing in the gas station when the power is switched back on.

❸ Koba is played by Toby Kebbell.

❹ Judy Greer's character is called Cordelia.

❺ Caesar and Koba defend
- themselves from a jackal at the start of the movie.

❻ When Caesar returns to his old home, an 'I' for 'Infected' is marked on the door.

❼ The final shot is of Jason Clarke walking off into the distance.

❽ Koba commandeers a tank while attacking the humans.
- ❾ The opening credits show real footage from the London riots.

❿ The book *Alexander* (Kodi Smit-McPhee) is seen reading is Pierre Boulle's original *Planet Of The Apes*.

⓫ Koba executes the two human guards with a pistol.

⓬ Kirk Acevedo, who plays Carver, also stars in *The Walking Dead*.

ANSWERS: 1. FALSE - HIS SON IS CALLED BLUE EYES. 2. TRUE. 3. TRUE. 4. FALSE - SHE'S CALLED CORNELIA. 5. FALSE - IT'S A BEAR. 6. FALSE - AN 'X' IS MARKED ON THE DOOR. 7. FALSE - WE SEE A CLOSE-UP OF CAESAR'S EYES. 8. TRUE. 9. TRUE. 10. TRUE. 11. FALSE - HE DOES IT WITH A MACHINE GUN. 12. TRUEEEE...



THE AWESOME LEGO MOVIE WORD SEARCH

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BECOME A MASTER BUILDER?

Everything about The Lego Movie was awesome, from the zingy, all-age-friendly script to the plethora of pop-culture tidbits. Relive the year's most purely enjoyably movie with this wonderful word search. Hell, get the help of a friend; after all, everything's cool when you're part of a team...

GREEN LANTERN

BATMAN

WONDERWOMAN

SUPERMAN

CHEWBACCA

HANSOLO

LANDO CALRISSIAN

MICHELANGELO

SHAQUILLE ONEAL

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

EMMET

WYLDSTYLE

UNIKITTY

BADCOP

LORD BUSINESS

E	L	D	E	N	L	A	L	G	E	R	J	J	Z	O
L	A	U	L	S	O	B	W	R	U	S	Q	P	S	L
L	N	N	Y	N	R	R	M	E	W	H	B	T	M	E
V	D	N	T	K	D	A	O	E	B	A	K	G	A	G
N	O	G	S	U	B	H	B	N	B	Q	L	D	L	N
A	C	H	D	N	U	A	I	L	S	U	W	R	E	A
M	A	E	L	I	S	M	D	A	U	I	W	B	M	L
O	L	W	Y	K	I	L	P	N	P	L	A	B	M	E
W	R	B	W	I	N	I	H	T	E	L	U	K	E	H
R	I	A	E	T	E	N	A	E	R	E	T	C	T	C
E	S	C	A	T	S	C	N	R	M	O	M	P	M	I
D	S	C	F	Y	S	O	S	N	A	N	A	J	X	M
N	I	A	Q	M	X	L	O	V	N	E	Q	W	J	F
O	A	Z	Q	U	Y	N	L	G	B	A	D	G	O	P
W	N	A	M	T	A	B	O	W	L	L	F	T	I	O



**"WE MADE THE BEST MOVIE WE
COULD AND PAINTED IT WITH LEGO"** DAN LIN



LEGO TOOK
OVER YOUR TOY BOX,
NOW THEY'RE
COMING FOR THE
MULTIPLEX

Batman and Superman have gone head-to-head two years early, and it's not quite how you imagined it. What should be the most cynical exercise on paper – fan-favourite licensed characters in a film based on a toy line – was one of the most glorious (and funny) movies of early 2014. We talk to producer Dan Lin about how LEGO won the hearts of geeks everywhere...

THINK OF LEGO, AND MANY OF US CONJURE UP AN IMAGE OF A VAST ARRAY OF COLOURFUL BRICKS SPREAD OUT ACROSS A LIVING ROOM FLOOR, READY TO BE BUILT INTO

whatever our wildest dreams might imagine. It might be a pirate ship, space station, western scene or, even better, a mash-up of all three. Because, as every Browncoat knows, there's no adventure better than one involving cowboy pirates in space.

But for an entire generation, the world of LEGO is something else entirely. No longer simply a pile of potentially painful foot-spearer plastic bits, the once basic toy has grown into a behemoth. LEGO is ubiquitous,

a veritable icon of pop culture. Everybody knows what LEGO is, and most of us love it. These days, there are videogames, digital comic-books, t-shirts and iPhone cases. And, of course, there's Warner Bros' upcoming movie, which will see the bricks of our childhood realised in a whole new way. So what is it about LEGO that we love so much, and why has it captured the imagination of generations?

"It's the biggest and best form of creative imagination," says Dan Lin, producer of *The LEGO Movie* and lifelong LEGO fan. "Kids can build according to instructions, but they can also build without them. There's all different types of play with the same toy – it's pretty incredible."

According to Lin, there's something profound about LEGO; it's more than just a toy. "My boys build these beautiful LEGO models and then they'll fight and the models will fall apart. I've been trying to teach them that that's OK – part of building is rebuilding. You can enjoy your first model, and then build something even better. I think it's a great lesson. It's really the purest form of education and imagination together."

While education might not be the primary concern of most kids purposefully pressing plastic bricks together to build whatever might be in their heads at any given moment, it was certainly a consideration for the man who came up with the concept, Danish toymaker Ole Kirk Christiansen. The company was established in 1932, but it wasn't until over 20 years later that he and son Godtfred began to produce the building blocks that we know and love today. The system has been built on those foundations ever since, inspiring kids across the globe to follow the company's ideal and 'play well'.

Today, there are hundreds of sets to choose from, ranging from much-loved, perennially fashionable classics to licensed products that cash in on fandoms such as *The Lord Of The Rings*, *Star Wars* and the beloved comic-book superheroes that have seen such a huge surge in popularity of late. And the joy of it all is that these worlds can, quite literally, smash together seamlessly to create a something entirely new.

Considering how possessive certain fandoms can be, it's really a marvel that die-hard Warsies, Potterheads and

YOU CAN BUILD HEROES

5 of the geekiest sets up for vote on LEGO Cuusoo

Taking full advantage of fan power, LEGO Cuusoo allows you to mock up and propose future LEGO sets, which are then voted on by the Cuusoo team. For those that do enter production, the creator earns one per cent of the profits.

With plenty on offer based on licenses LEGO already owns – *Star Wars*, Marvel and DC Comics – we scoured LEGO.cuusoo.com for some of the most weird, wonderful and downright geeky sets that are up for consideration.

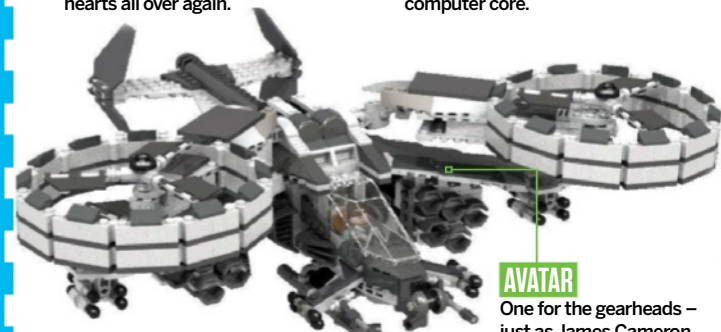


ET: THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL

With five characters and a whole bundle of accessories – including Reese's Pieces – based on Steven Spielberg's 1982 family favourite, the set includes the house, shed and medical van for breaking tiny child hearts all over again.

2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY

This proposed set based on the 1968 Stanley Kubrick epic consists of a selection of standalone 'micro-dioramas', including the monolith in prehistory and in space, the space pod and Hal's computer core.



TERRY PRATCHETT'S DISCWORLD

Capturing the broad strokes of Terry Pratchett's comic fantasy universe with a depiction of the Discworld itself, as well as individual characters including Rincewind, Granny Weatherwax, Sam Vimes, the Librarian and Death, the set's creator also plans to donate half of his profits to Alzheimer's research.

AVATAR

One for the gearheads – just as James Cameron would like it – this scaled-down depiction of the AT-99 Scorpion Gunship is just one of nearly a dozen possible sets with which you could explore the incredible world of *Avatar*.

Support and propose your own LEGO sets through Cuusoo at LEGO.cuusoo.com

GHOSTBUSTERS

Truly epic, not only do you get Ecto-1 and all four Ghostbusters with their equipment (proton packs, PKE meters etc), but the whole Firehouse HQ with light-up lights on each floor and a red alarm light for when shit gets real.



➤ Ringers not only have no objection to the commercialisation of their passion, but embrace it, happily sending Legolas and Harry to do battle with Darth Vader, not caring in the slightest that such characters have no business existing in the same universe. It's fan fiction in physical form, without all the disturbing and icky shipping that would be logistically impossible, not to mention uncomfortable, with LEGO.

"LEGO's a rare toy – you can mix genres, and it's OK," Lin tells us. "That's the way you play with LEGO. So in the movie we have the wild west, a city environment, an underwater environment, we have a crazy imaginary environment that we created ourselves – the great thing about LEGO is that you can mix all these genres together, and when you're playing it still feels like one cohesive experience."

THAT EXPERIENCE WAS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR THE FILMMAKERS, WHO FIRST BEGAN WORKING ON THE PROJECT BACK IN 2008. FROM THE OFF, THEY WERE

aware that for every excitable and nostalgic geek jumping up and down at the prospect of the project, there would be a cynical naysayer ready to sneer at the obvious commercial aspect of it.

In truth, it's hard not to do just that. If the film achieves half the success that's expected of it, LEGO are set to make themselves some serious money in merchandise. As well as the mandatory range of minifigures and building sets based on the film's original characters, books, school supplies and clothing lines, there will be an equally obligatory videogame. Lin admits that he enjoyed a fanboy moment on seeing the animated characters come to life. "It was incredible. To pitch these ideas and see them drawn and then fully rendered in the movie is one thing, but to have the physical form of

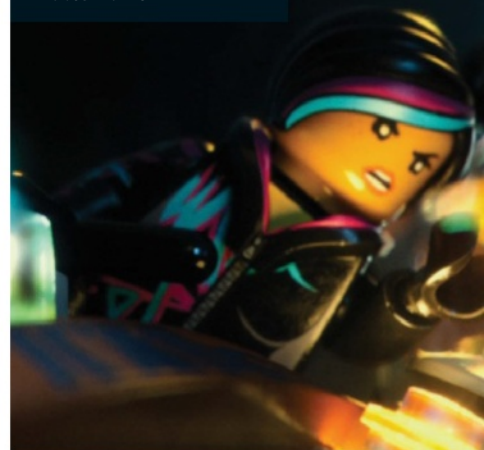
them and to touch and feel and play with it is really something else," but the producer insists that *The LEGO Movie* won't simply be a two-hour advertisement for a product that, quite frankly, doesn't need the boost.

"Our ambition was not to make a commercial," he assures us. "The great thing is that LEGO just said to us, 'Guys, just make the best movie that you can. Don't worry about selling toys, let us worry about that.' So we really just told the best story possible using LEGO as an art form."

"Nobody made the movie wanting to sell anything explicitly – we made the best movie we could and painted it with LEGO. If people enjoy the movie, it'll be a great commercial endeavour, but that wasn't the ambition going in. If it were a commercial, we'd be highlighting LEGO sets currently being sold, and we didn't. Obviously, there are famous characters, but we wanted to create our own world."

When it came to doing so, the imaginations of the film's creators were

One of the new characters for the movie is Wyldstyle, voiced by Elizabeth Banks.





"WE HAVE A DIFFERENT SPIN ON THESE SUPERHEROES – THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPERMAN AND GREEN LANTERN ISN'T WHAT YOU EXPECT" DAN LIN



key, as they took inspiration from their own childhood memories, and sought insight from their children's more modern favourites to come up with a cast and a plot that will see one lucky minifigure thrown into an epic adventure when he accidentally joins forces with a group of Master Builders to stop an evil tyrant from destroying the LEGO universe by doing the unthinkable and – gasp! – *gluing* it together.

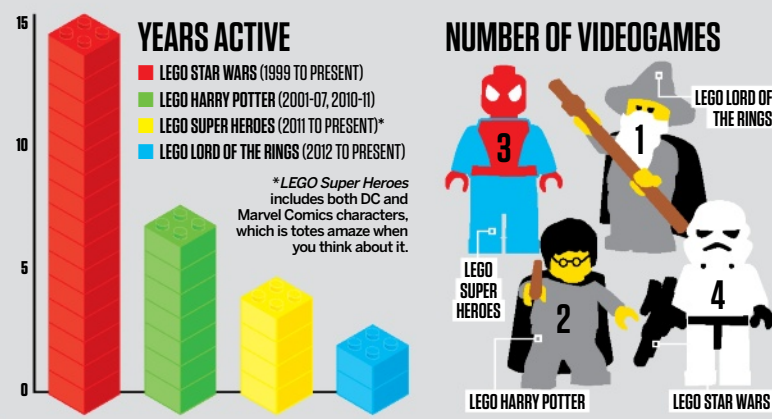
"We were inspired by LEGO sets that we loved growing up, as you've probably seen in the trailer," Lin explains. "One of our characters is Benny the Spaceman – he comes from an Eighties space set, Classic LEGO Space, and there's the green ninja from Ninjago, which is something that my kids really love, so it's kind of a mix."



The Lego Movie promises to be a fun pop culture mash-up.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF SUCCESS

How LEGO tapped into the fans and took over the world



THAT MIX INCLUDES A BAFFLING ARRAY OF CHARACTERS, FROM 'ORDINARY GUY'-TYPE HERO EMMET (VOICED BY CHRIS PRATT, SOON TO BE OF GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY

fame) to mystical Gandalf-like LEGO master Vitruvius (Morgan Freeman) and the Dark Knight himself, Batman (Will Arnett). But while the concept might seem strange at first, it makes perfect sense when Lin explains it, assuring SciFiNow that the intention wasn't simply to cash in on the rise of the geek.

"We have what we call the 'Master Builders' in our world. They're like the Jedi Knights of our world, and naturally superheroes fit into that category," he says, dismissing the suggestion that DC icons might have been included simply to satisfy current demand for all things superpowered and spandex. "But we also have lots of other characters – Shaquille O'Neal, a swamp creature, Cleopatra and Abraham Lincoln. It wasn't about superheroes, but coming up with characters that fit the criteria."

The producer also promises that we're going to see something different from the more recognisable characters in the movie, the reaction to which will be interesting

considering how possessive certain fandoms can be.

"There's a real wink to it," he says. "We have a different spin on these superheroes. The relationship between Superman and Green Lantern isn't what you expect; it's something different that you haven't seen in the DC universe so far. The version of Batman is very different from the one in Tim Burton's universe or Chris Nolan's universe. We really wanted to tell a story with a wink and a very specific sense of humour."

But getting the characters right wasn't the only concern for directors Phil Lord, Chris Miller and Chris McKay. Filmed using a mixture of traditional stop-motion and CG animation, the movie aims to recreate the real-life experience of playing with the toy, and not just with regard to the movement of the minifigures.

"The movie represents the play experience we had as kids, and the play experience that we have now with our kids. We tried to be as true as possible with the LEGO minifigures, but we had to cheat just a little bit to make the action more exciting.

"The movie should look real to everyone – it's really everyone's LEGO toys coming ➤



SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED

Director of LEGO Marvel Super Heroes Arthur Parsons on bricking it

What is it that makes LEGO so perfectly suited to exploring the worlds of everything from *Star Wars* to *Marvel*?

Firstly, pretty much everything looks awesome when made out of LEGO. The second thing is that I think LEGO symbolises fun, and our games are all about having fun within the universe we are working in. We want people to enjoy and play our games and be entertained, and LEGO gives us the building bricks to do this.

How much freedom do you have when exploring licensed worlds like *Marvel*?

We research everything, think as fans of the brand and, most important of all, ensure we have a terrific working relationship with not only the LEGO company, but also the licensor, the company that looks after the brand. We are given an incredible amount of freedom to explore these worlds and create fun, whimsical content, but within the rules of the given property and working in tandem with the licensor.

Game development isn't a case of us trying to do things and the licensor keeping us in check; it's more a case of us developing fun content with the licensor, with both sides ensuring the game development and approval process is engaging and fun. Licensors trust us because of the care and respect we show their brands.

How conscious are you of there being such a broad audience for *LEGO Marvel Super Heroes*?

We knew from experience with other titles we've done that the game was going to appeal to a wide range of people. This didn't change the way we approached the game, though; we always put content in that will appeal to all ages.

For *Marvel*, we knew our younger audience may be familiar with some aspects of the brand, but not others. We developed the game to be a fun and thrilling adventure, knowing we'd be introducing some people to things for the first time. We couldn't assume that players would be as familiar with the brand as we are. We don't overcomplicate things, and at every step of the way just try and make sure that what we are doing in the game is authentic. If it's authentic, then the user will be happy, regardless of their age or *Marvel* knowledge.

The way the characters are used in *LEGO Marvel Super Heroes* is just fantastic. How did you approach each character?

Right from the start, we wanted to make every character as close to their 'real life' counterpart as possible. This was highlighted as being our focus, making sure each character had unique moves, abilities, effects, audio, really bringing these minifigures to life. Making sure Spider-Man, Iron Man, Hulk, Wolverine and the many other characters felt and sounded right and were believable was important to us.

What characters were you the most excited about seeing come to life?

As someone that grew up watching the classic Seventies *Fantastic Four* cartoons, I was most excited about bringing them to life; making the Thing say "Clobbering Time!" giving Reed Richards a host of wacky transforms and having the Human Torch burst into flames and shout "Flame on!" in tandem with Sue Storm using her invisibility and telekinesis. That said, seeing Bruce Banner transform into Hulk was awesome, likewise Spider-Man swinging around New York.

LEGO Marvel Super Heroes is out now for PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, PC, Wii U and Xbox One.



Among the game thespians willing to send themselves up is Morgan Freeman.

to life. And in a dream world, our kids should watch the movie and go, 'Oh wow, I can build the whole movie!' And the truth is you can, but there are a lot of pieces involved. Every single scene in our movie can be built."

THE COMMITMENT TO RECREATING THAT PLAY EXPERIENCE MEANT GOING INTO A HUGE AMOUNT OF PAINSTAKING DETAIL FOR THE ANIMATORS OF ANIMAL LOGIC, THE

Australian production house that brought you *Legend Of The Guardians* and *Happy Feet*, who took full advantage of the vast array of components available from LEGO's catalogue. Much like the worlds built inside our own imaginations and on our parents' floors, what we'll see on screen is made entirely of LEGO – from sets and vehicles to trees, coffee cups and clouds.

"If you look at the clouds, the smoke, the fire, the water, everything is brick-built using LEGO pieces," explains Lin. And rather than distance itself from the low-tech, rather old-school medium, the movie embraces its origins. That the film is about a toy is very

much the point. To that end, the familiar satisfying clicking noise is omnipresent in the soundtrack, and even limbs pop off occasionally.

"Every little detail and imperfection in the toy is in the movie," Lin continues. "The theory is that everything's been played with for a while, so you'll see fingerprints on things. You'll see scuffing, chips, and a little bit of dirt at times. This is meant to take place in a world where these toys have been loved and played with; nothing looks brand new and shiny."

Given the love for LEGO, not to mention the passion for some of the characters featured within it, there's a huge amount of nostalgia in this project. That sentimentality seems to have been a draw not only for those who came up with the idea for the film in the first place, but for the impressive cast of Oscar winners, nominees and Hollywood luminaries who leant their voices to it.

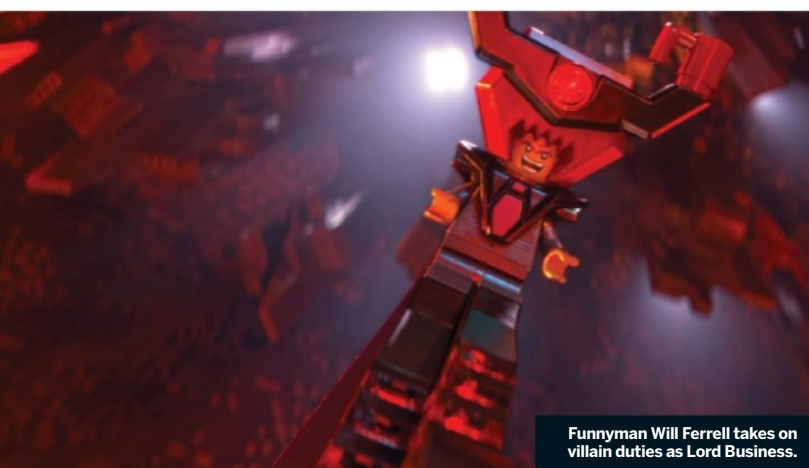
"They really loved voicing and creating their characters," says Lin. "They all had a lot of input into the design of their characters as well. I think they all really

Chris Pratt voices the protagonist, everyman Emmet.





“WE HAVE LOTS OF OTHER CHARACTERS – SHAQUILLE O’NEAL, A SWAMP CREATURE, CLEOPATRA AND ABRAHAM LINCOLN” DAN LIN



Funnyman Will Ferrell takes on villain duties as Lord Business.



enjoyed seeing their likeness translated into a LEGO minifigure.”

Another aspect of LEGO that the movie embraces is its gender neutrality. LEGO has always been something that appeals to – and is aimed at – both boys and girls, allowing them to cross gender lines as they see fit. Over the years, the company has had mixed success with various efforts to perhaps unnecessarily sell to each specifically, but the film thankfully won’t make such distinctions. The ladies are represented by key characters in Cobie Smulders’ Wonder Woman, Alison Brie’s Uni-Kitty and Elizabeth Banks’ heroine, Wyldstyle.

“Wyldstyle’s kind of like the Trinity of our movie,” says Lin. “A free-spirited Master Builder with coloured streaks in her hair. She’s very independent and she’s got an attitude. Like Elizabeth, she’s really a strong,

independent woman. She’s tough, and can hang out with the guys.

“It was really important for the cast to enjoy the spirit of LEGO,” continues Lin. “Chris Pratt is a very normal, ordinary person, but he’s so loveable, likeable and enthusiastic, and you see that in his performance. Every actor brought their own twist and made the character their own.

“Will Ferrell’s fantastic, but he plays something we haven’t seen before from him – normally he’s a laid-back, lackadaisical type of funnyman, but in this he plays an uptight CEO who wants things ‘just so’. And Liam Neeson got the chance to do comedy. That’s the most incredible thing, that we have guys like Morgan Freeman and Liam Neeson, who are Academy Award-winning or nominated actors, playing comedic characters. They really make fun of themselves. Neeson’s bad cop/good cop persona is pretty genius.”

THAT ENTHUSIASM IS THE PERFECT DEMONSTRATION OF LEGO’S WIDE-RANGING APPEAL. THOUGH OSTENSIBLY A TOY FOR, AS THE PACKAGING SAYS, FIVE-12 YEAR

olds, it’s long been something that fascinates grown-ups, and not just those simply interested in indulging their inner child. From artists such as New York-based Nathan Sawaya, who uses the bricks as a medium for his impressive, life-sized sculptures, to designers creating LEGO-inspired furniture and the YouTube users who dedicate hours to creating clever stop-motion shorts, LEGO works on many levels, and the movie will do the same.

“We tried to make a movie that would appeal to all generations – adult fans

who grew up with LEGO in the Seventies and Eighties, and the kids now who grew up with different characters and sets,” offers Lin.

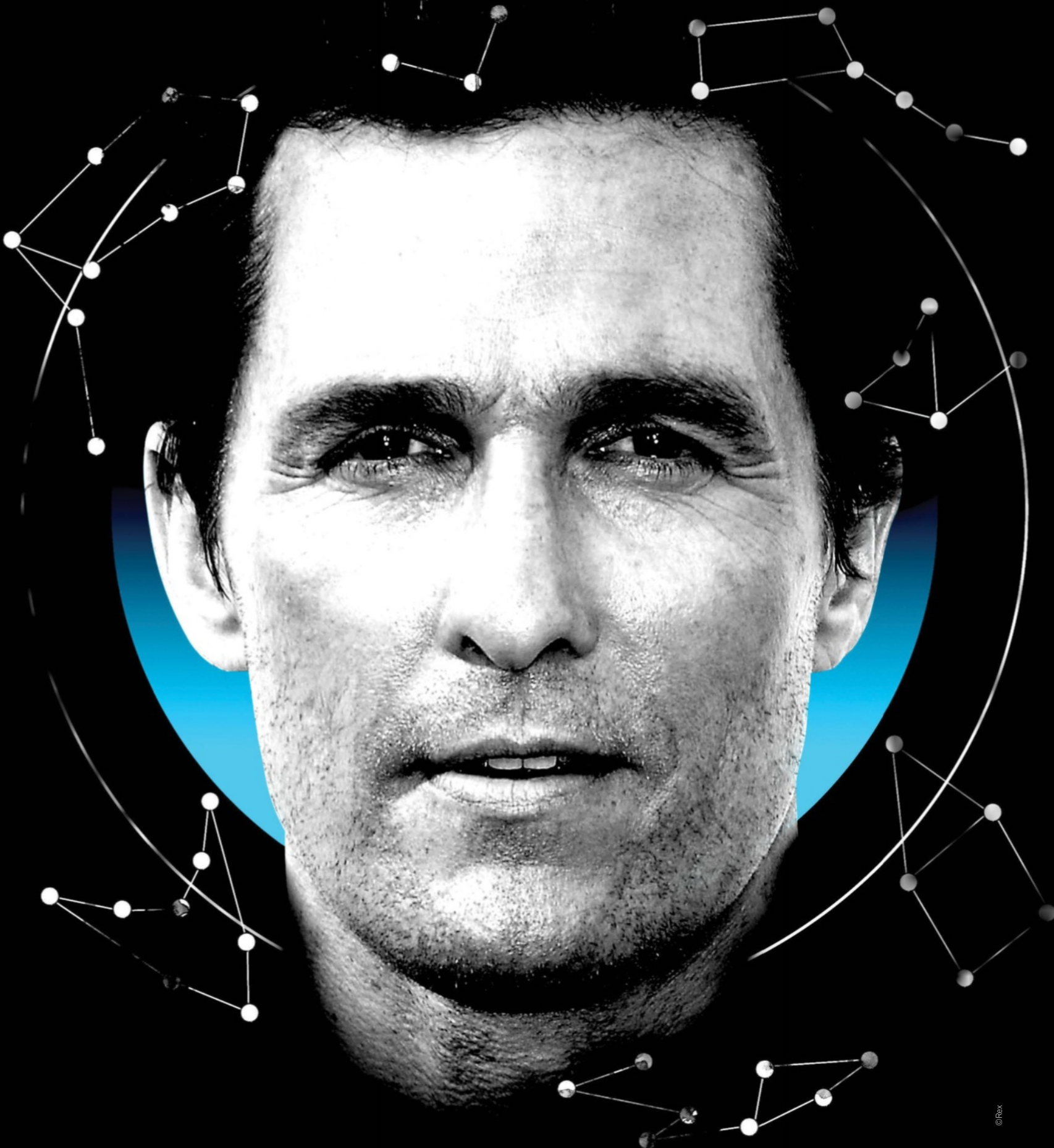
“That was the big challenge going into this. We’re not making a movie just for kids. The target audience for LEGO toys is ages five-12 – yes, we want to appeal to that audience, but we also want to appeal to their parents and people who played with LEGO as a kid. We really wanted to make sure we spoke to our core audience, but broadened it out. The humour works on two levels – there’s something for everyone.”

Whether he’s right or not remains to be seen. Critics and fans alike have already gone crazy for the trailers, enthusiastically agreeing with the title theme – everything is awesome. But the proof, as always, will be in the viewing. Warner Bros will doubtless be hoping for a fantastically successful franchise from this first foray into LEGO filmmaking, while for LEGO it probably won’t make much of a difference at all. For his part, though, Lin’s not afraid of the challenge, and reckons the concept can go anywhere.

“Because there’s no pre-existing mythology, as you can imagine there are many stories that we’d love to explore. We hope people enjoy it, and we feel we’ve only touched the tip of the iceberg – there’s still many, many worlds that we can explore and stories to tell. We love these characters so much we’d love to take them on a further journey, but the audience will tell us if they want us to do that.”

The LEGO Movie is available on Blu-Ray from Warner Bros.





INSIDE CHRISTOPHER NOLAN'S SPACE ODYSSEY

INTERSTELLAR

HOW CHRISTOPHER NOLAN INVOKED THE SPIRIT OF SCI-FI'S GREATEST MOVIES FOR HIS LATEST EPIC VOYAGE

IF ONE DIRECTOR HAS DEFINED THE MODERN ADULT BLOCKBUSTER, IT'S CHRISTOPHER NOLAN. NO FILMMAKER HAS INSPIRED THE KIND OF FIERCE, UNWAVERING DEVOTION

from the art house to the multiplex that he enjoys. His work and process have shown a willingness to push the boundaries of modern filmmaking technology while keeping a steadfast commitment to the techniques of the medium's giants. *Interstellar*, a science-fiction epic invoking the spirit of Spielberg and Kubrick, is a huge next step for Nolan in every possible sense.

"This is a film that very much looks out," enthuses producer Emma Thomas, who has worked on every Nolan film since his 1997 short *Doodlebug* and 1998 feature debut *Following*. "Many of the films we've worked on, while they may have been epic in scale, have been very much earth-bound. It's difficult to say they've been small, but they've definitely been about individual human concerns, whereas this story is much bigger in scope. It's about the future of humanity as a whole; instead of just playing on the canvas of Earth, it literally goes into other galaxies. It's an entirely different thing for us, and that was very appealing."

A lack of scope and ambition is certainly not something you can accuse Nolan of. Think of the concurrently operating dreamscapes in *Inception*, the determination to shoot sequences of superhero movies in IMAX, or the sheer narrative ingenuity of *The Prestige*. When Nolan's operating at his best, his

films are a Sistine Chapel and a Lament Configuration puzzle box all at once.

So not exactly light on ambition then, but this is a story that takes the momentum of his *Dark Knight* trilogy and *Inception* and channels it into a great running jump.

"I grew up watching films about that next step in the human story," explains writer – and brother of Christopher – Jonathan Nolan. "That bold leap out into the unknown. I hadn't really seen anything quite like that, and I hadn't seen anything quite like that in some time. It was 2007 when I was hired to write this film, and that moment did not feel like a terribly optimistic moment. I wanted to write something that had a strong thread of optimism running through it about humanity, grounded hopefully in a realistic assessment of the difficulty of space travel and the difficulties of existence, the unlikeliness of life in the universe, but with a thread of optimism that ran through it in terms of what makes us human and where the next chapter in our story will take us."

It doesn't come as a huge surprise that this pitch for an optimistic, epic sci-fi film about the triumph of humanity first landed in the hands of Steven Spielberg. The master filmmaker was attached for some time, but eventually left the project, at which point the Nolan brothers decided that it was the perfect opportunity for another collaboration. Indeed, Thomas tells us that Jonathan's script had piqued his brother's interest from the get-go.

"Yeah, we knew he was working on it. It was all super-secret, but we knew that he was. I think the first time we spoke to Paramount about it was actually before we went and made *The Dark Knight Rises*, and Chris expressed an interest then. When he finished that we started thinking about what he wanted to do next. He had been developing his own ideas for a space film and at that point, when we finished *The Dark Knight Rises* and started really thinking about what the next project was, he felt like there was a world in which he could meld those two ideas together, Jonah's script with his ideas. So we went into Paramount and pitched them on the rough sense of what Chris was to bring to the project, and luckily for us they liked the idea! They trusted us to go off and make it work. When Chris started writing on it, that was the moment where it really became a Chris movie."

The announcement that the brothers Nolan would be collaborating once more made a huge amount of sense to fans like us, and Jonathan tells us that the process was exactly as natural as you'd have thought. "I've never worked on anything, and I don't think Chris has ever worked on anything that we haven't run past each other at a very early stage," reveals Nolan. "He's been a great first reader for me on everything I've ever worked on; *Interstellar* was no different. As I was developing the script originally for Steven, I would be talking to Chris often, and I could tell he was sort of developing something. We »»

» were both dabbling in a universe that we were both very interested in. So it seemed like the most natural thing in the world to make it with Chris."

What they were both interested in was science fiction on an epic scale – a journey into the stars that took their ambition to the next level. The announcement kept things vague, pitching a real event movie involving wormhole technology and alternate dimensions. *Interstellar* finds Earth facing the last throes of its existence, with dust storms ravaging the planet and resources running out. There is one last hope for humanity: a spectacular voyage through wormholes to find a planet that can sustain us, but there's no guarantee of success, or even a return. Our hero is Cooper (Matthew McConaughey), a former pilot who is the first and only choice to pilot such a terrifying mission. He must leave his family behind to undertake the most important journey in our history.

ROOTED IN AMERICA'S HEARTLAND (THE FACT THAT COOPER IS LIVING ON A FARM WHEN THE FILM STARTS FEELS NONE-MORE-SPIELBERG-IAN) WITH AN everyman hero facing the incredible unknown, there's a distinct and deliberate feel of classic Hollywood about *Interstellar*. "I grew up watching films like *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind*, which hint at that adventure, but does so from an Earth-bound perspective, or films like *Alien*," Nolan explains. "*Alien* is probably one of the first films that I remember watching and dissecting as a film experience, *2001* same thing. I grew up with an older brother, so I was exposed to films that were far too adult for my



age! But *Alien* and *2001* and films of that ilk, the idea of the pure science fiction, the pure age of exploration in space movie was always terribly appealing."

We've seen a lot of that love for the classics in some of the best lower-budget sci-fi from filmmakers like Gareth Edwards, Duncan Jones and Neill Blomkamp, but *Interstellar* might be the biggest film yet to look both forwards and back. Naturally, Nolan's name is enough to send the internet into a tizzy of excitement, but the massive impact of each successive trailer



• Above, clockwise from top left: Exploring new planets; Cooper, Brand (Hathaway) and Romilly (David Gyasi) investigate; Romilly in his space suit.

suggests that there's love for these movies in the mainstream too. "I think there is. I guess we'll see!" Thomas tells us. "We'll see how people respond. What we wanted to do was make a grand space adventure, and it very much harks back to those movies that we enjoyed watching as kids. Certainly, Chris has been massively influenced by Spielberg's movies and others, I don't know, I'm certainly hoping there's a hunger for that!"

Thomas' nerves are a little surprising given their

TO THE END OF THE UNIVERSE

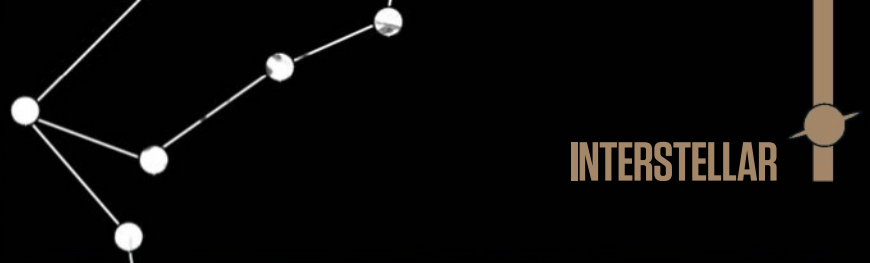
HOW FAR DID THESE SPACE TRAVELLERS GO?

THE SUN
Sunshine
149.6 million km

VENUS
First Spaceship On Venus
42 million km

THE MOON
Moon
384,400 km

MARS
Total Recall
92.4 million km



INTERSTELLAR



track record, but it's hard to forget that this is a colossal endeavour. Leaving aside Nolan's love of shooting whole sequences with the enormous, expensive and impractical (but brilliant) IMAX camera, the filmmakers were determined to ensure that classic technology was used for the making of a future classic, something which Jonathan tells us is very reassuring for a screenwriter.

"I know him well, and I know how he'll tackle things," he enthuses.

"There's a commitment there to tactical production rather

• Above right, clockwise from top left: A glimpse of the all-important spacecraft; Anne Hathaway returns to Nolan to star as Brand; feet firmly back on earth as Christopher Nolan offers some direction.

than green-screen misadventures. So standing on the set of this film was the best of the old and the best of the new. The set would have been recognisable to filmmakers working in the last turn of the century and the middle of the century, some of the films we grew up watching, rather than a green carpet with a couple of props in it.

"A few years ago it seemed like the entire film business was barrelling in the direction of making these things in someone's backyard with green screen. I think this has a scope and scale to it... it's not an animated movie; it's a real

movie. And when you stood on those sets, they were doing the digital effects first and projecting them on the set, and it's transformative. The actors are really there; you're really there. That was an extraordinary experience, so it's always a pleasure working with Chris because you know it will be realised on the best and biggest possible canvas, which is terribly exciting."

Exciting it may well be, but this commitment to practical effects must surely be somewhat unnerving to a producer. "I have to say, pre-production is never my favourite time!" laughs

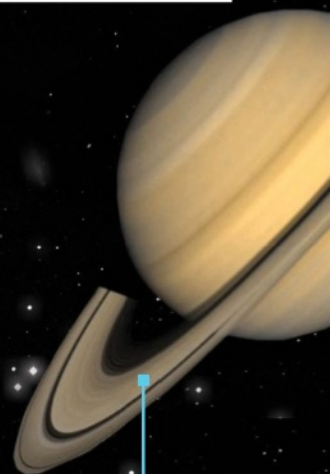


— JUST OUT OF
EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE
Gravity
400 km

JUPITER
Europa Report
588 million km



NEPTUNE
Event Horizon
4.3 billion km



SATURN
Saturn 3
1.2 billion km

» Thomas. "It's always the moment where you're looking at the scripts and you're terribly excited about all the ideas and the potential for what you're hoping the film will be on the big screen, but at the same time you're grappling with the realities of how you actually make it, and make it work for the money that you have. And so yes, as a producer it was a daunting task, but luckily we have a really great team, many of whom we've worked with before and some of whom were new to us. The finished film is quite a leap from what we were even visualising on the day, and it's just a much bigger movie once you see it all together!"

The confidence that *Interstellar* will be a bigger movie – in terms of box-office receipts as well as budget – than anything Nolan has made before was made clear by seeing major studios grappling over the rights to the movie. The script was set up with Spielberg at Paramount, but Warner Bros were naturally keen to stay in the Christopher Nolan business, and the rights to *Friday 13th* and a piece of *South Park* was given up, while Legendary Pictures forfeited their stake in *Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice* for *Interstellar*.

"I think we feel a bit more confident about the things we're doing than when we did *Batman Begins*, but still, making a film isn't necessarily easy," explains Thomas. "The thing that is easier is getting studios to trust us I think because we're lucky enough to have had successful movies over the last few years, and so where they might be less eager to take a risk on an original project with somebody who hasn't had that level of success, we've been incredibly lucky in that we've been able to say 'Well, we did it on this one, and we'd like to do it again,' and they've trusted us."

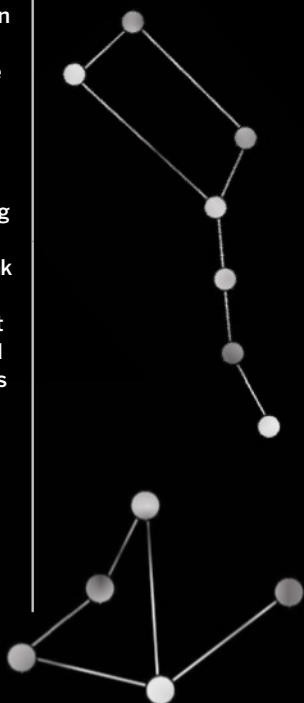
Intriguingly, Nolan's commitment to classic film technology might well be part of the studio's willingness to let him push the envelope. "The interesting thing is that in some ways what's old is new again," Thomas tells us. "And I think that a lot of the way we shot this is actually the way that some of the great movies of the past have been shot, and though we combined all the techniques with cutting-edge technology in the digital realm, the visual effects team at DNA, and so I think the studios are always looking for something that's going to work and that's going to be something that they can sell. And the good news is that if you have an original way to do something, whether



• Above: It's a thing-a-ma-bob. Technical term...

• Opposite, top: Nolan and McConaughey on set.

• Opposite, bottom: Jessica Chastain and Casey Affleck join the all-star cast



that's using technology that comes from 20 years ago in combination with something new, or if it's something entirely new, if it's something that is going to work in the finished film and it's something that they can sell I think they're happy to embrace it."

OF COURSE, IT'S NOT JUST CHRISTOPHER NOLAN'S TRACK RECORD THAT HAS PROPELLED *INTERSTELLAR* THROUGH PRODUCTION. THERE'S THE SMALL matter of the film's incredible cast. With the likes of Anne Hathaway, Jessica Chastain, Casey Affleck, Michael Caine, John Lithgow and Matt Damon involved, it seems like Hollywood's finest must have been hammering on Nolan's door to be cast.

"Gosh, I don't think we ever have to beat people away," demurs Thomas. "The casting process is always nail-biting because you want to make sure you're getting the right people, and it's not easy. We've been very lucky in that we've managed to get some really fantastic actors to play some in some cases fairly small roles, but I think that there's something that really

distinguishes the film when you see it, because every character is – it's like the real world; every character has depth and is amazing, and we're very lucky that we've managed to have actors with some really great talent."

When it came to the role of everyman Cooper, the filmmakers knew that an actor with a special kind of quality was required. "We were very much looking for an actor who is kind of an everyman, who can carry the audience through this pretty outlandish story," explains Thomas. "It's pretty fantastical and incredible, and there are some big ideas in the movie. We really needed somebody who as I said could bring the audience with him, and I think that Matthew is so that guy."

It wasn't just his everyman quality that led to his casting. That sense of a classic American cinema, an era of movies gone by, came to be important once again. "He just feels like an actor sprung from an earlier generation where there was a more optimistic moment in American cinema," enthuses Nolan. "McConaughey seems to me to embody that kind of mid-century



optimism of America in a way that is very rare. He's just a charming, affable, very American guy, and because the film is about a moment in the future where that means something very different and we've arrived in a kind of post-national, nationalist moment in which the nation state has simply stopped serving any function and has dropped away. That throwback sensibility was important for us to find. It's difficult to imagine anyone but McConaughey embodying that."

That perfect fit of actor to character seems to be indicative of the project as a whole. One look at *Interstellar*, and it's clear who made it, and to be honest, it doesn't seem like anyone else could have done. Spielberg's *Interstellar* might have been great, but it wouldn't have looked like this.

"Steven's a lovely person and unbelievably talented filmmaker, and it was a true privilege to sit with him and talk story," remembers Nolan. "He contributed many cool ideas to the draft that we put together, but sometimes these things come together and sometimes they don't."

What's funny about the subject matter is the film is very much about these massive expensive machines and missions that for a few decades we mounted to propel us into outer space. It feels just as unlikely to get a film made as it does that you'd be able to fill an aluminium or alloy canister with explosives and then propel half a dozen people or three people up into outer space."

"Getting a film made is very difficult, and getting all the right pieces in place and getting it all together is very difficult. For me, this became a labour of love in terms of wanting to get it made and get it made with a filmmaker who could achieve the scope and the scale required. There are really only a handful of those people around, period, so the relationship for me with Chris – the ability to call on a filmmaker that talented, to just collaborate – it's just a natural fit that we would wind up making this film together."

***Interstellar* is out in cinemas now across the globe.**

DREAM A LITTLE BIGGER

EMMA THOMAS EXPLAINS WHY CHRISTOPHER NOLAN'S FILMS WON'T GET SMALLER

Given the size and scale of *Interstellar* and, if we're honest, every Christopher Nolan film since *Batman Begins*, you'd think that he and his team would be yearning to make a small, intimate family drama.

"Sometimes!" laughs Thomas. "I don't know, with this one, I think at the beginning I thought, 'Gosh, do we really want to make another really big movie?' but the truth is that it was actually really fun, and I think that when you're excited about a project and excited about the story that you're telling, you're just happy to be working on putting that story on the screen."

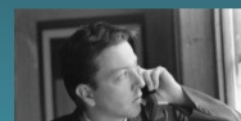
The studios certainly seem happy to keep giving Nolan what he needs to make these films, and Thomas explains that having that opportunity is part of what keeps these films getting bigger. "I think we'd be happy with any level of budget or size of film, it would just have to be a story that we're interested in telling. Although I will say definitely, when you know you're in a place where you can get a film financed and made, it's always good to sort of go for it, so I guess in some ways that's why we've been making bigger ones lately!"

NOLAN BY NUMBERS

KEY ● -BUDGET ● -WORLDWIDE GROSS

FOLLOWING

Budget: \$6,000
Gross: \$48,482



MEMENTO

Budget: \$9 million
Gross: \$39,723,096



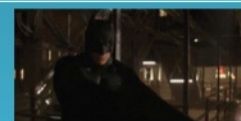
INSOMNIA

Budget: \$46 million
Gross: \$113,714,830



BATMAN BEGINS

Budget: \$150 million
Gross: \$374,218,673



THE PRESTIGE

Budget: \$40 million
Gross: \$109,676,311



THE DARK KNIGHT

Budget: \$185 million
Gross: \$1,004,558,444



INCEPTION

Budget: \$160 million
Gross: \$825,532,764



THE DARK KNIGHT RISES

Budget: \$250 million
Gross: \$1,084,439,099



TOMORROW NEVER DIES

2014'S BIGGEST, DUMBEST SCI-FI SPECTACLE, OR A GENRE-SUBVERTING SURPRISE THAT HAS CREPT RIGHT UNDER THE WIRE? **EDGE OF TOMORROW** PLUGGED ACTION FAVOURITE **TOM CRUISE** INTO AN ARMoured EXOSKELETON AND AN ALIEN-BATTLING FUTURE WAR, BUT **ACCORDING TO DIRECTOR DOUG LIMAN**, ALL IS NOT AS IT SEEMS...

THIS SUMMER'S REQUISITE BIG-BUDGET TOM CRUISE MOVIE SEES THE STAR IN YET ANOTHER BATTLE FOR THE PLANET WHEN A CRUEL AND UGLY ALIEN RACE DECIDES TO INVADe EARTH AND DESTROY HUMANITY. SOUNDS LIKE A STANDARD SCI-FI BLOCKBUSTER,

right? Well, it's not – at least according to *Edge Of Tomorrow* director Doug Liman, who is unashamedly outspoken in his lament of what he calls “cookie cutter” studio movies.

But in an age where it's generally accepted that no idea is wholly original, is Liman really going to give us something different? Best known for his work on critically acclaimed actioners *The Bourne Identity* and *Mr & Mrs Smith*, as well as his breakout hit *Swingers*, Liman's previous foray into science fiction comes in the decidedly dodgy form of 2008's *Jumper* – a film with a promising premise that failed to deliver.

Edge Of Tomorrow is another adaptation, this time loosely based on Japanese author Hiroshi Sakurazaka's light novel *All You Need Is Kill*. While the original story doesn't seem to have had much bearing on the resulting film, it clearly inspired Liman to attempt something a little bit different with his latest studio project.

“It's so rare these days to find a film that fulfils a big studio appetite and at the same time is wholly original,” he says. “You tend to see a lot of either big movies that just feel like you've seen it before – usually because you have – or you see eclectic and original movies, but they're much smaller. I look at the trailers for a bunch of movies coming ➤

"IT'S A HUGE IRONY
THAT I'VE GOT TOM
CRUISE, ALIENS AND
TIME TRAVEL, AND
I'M THE FILM THAT'S
THE COUNTER-
PROGRAMMING OF THE
SUMMER"

DOLG LIMAN

out and it looks like cookie-cutter stuff. Who's going to want to watch them in 50 years? It doesn't seem like people are making bold and courageous choices in the movies that are being made, and when I think of Hollywood that's what I think of. It doesn't mean that you can't make a great independent film within the Hollywood system – look at *Gravity* – it does happen, but I wish it happened more often.”

It's a strong stance to take, particularly when that Hollywood formula is tried, tested and translates to box-office success, for better or worse. But in this project, Liman saw an opportunity to break the mould and step into unknown territory.

OCCASIONALLY, A PROJECT COMES ALONG THAT CAN HAVE THE SCOPE THAT *EDGE OF TOMORROW* HAS, BUT AT THE SAME TIME IS 100 PER CENT ORIGINAL,” HE EXPLAINS.

“There was no pressure from Warner Bros to make this look like a standard studio film. It's a huge irony that I've got Tom Cruise, aliens and time travel, and I'm the film that's the counter-programming of the summer. It's not like other films.

“Directing a movie is an insecurity-making experience, because everyone expects you to know how to do it. The system wants directors to show up on the set and give confident answers – they don't want to hear a director say, ‘I don't know’. But early on in the process of *Edge Of Tomorrow* I was like, ‘I've never made a movie like this before, I really don't know what I'm doing.’ Sometimes, saying your insecurities out loud allows you to take ownership of it. They can't out you as an impostor if you 'fess up right at the beginning! And the people around me push me to try to shake it up and do something you haven't seen before.”

On the face of it, though, we have seen it all before. Alien invasion? Check. Time

travel? Check. Tom Cruise bravely stepping into the breach to save the world? Check, check and check again – almost to the point of tedium.

This director's approach to this seemingly standard fantasy fare, though, is something of a departure from tradition in several ways. For starters, the sci-fi of it all really wasn't the point for Liman.

“I do love science fiction, but really what drew me to this was how much fun you could have with a character who had to relive a battle over and over again and try to change the outcome,” he says. “It's a totally new paradigm. Here's an opportunity to make a film that isn't going to be like anything else out there – ever. It's truly unique, and at the same time it's really fun and exciting. That, to me, is the jackpot.

“At the end of the day I was not making a movie about an alien invasion; I was interested in this arena in terms of the effect it has on the characters. Aliens don't necessarily bring out the best character development, as is evidenced by a lot of recent alien invasion movies. Dying and repeating the day – that brings out a lot of really interesting character issues.

“I like putting real human beings through extraordinary situations. If you look at *Mr & Mrs Smith*, there's a real couple, trying to deal with the real insecurities and trust issues of a marriage. There are machine guns and outrageous stuff happening, but all of that is a way of bringing out what's interesting about the human beings. I thought this was a concept that allowed me to have a great love story between two people where they have to start out from scratch every day, and trying to figure out how to build that was a really exciting challenge, and something that Tom [Cruise] and Emily [Blunt] did an extraordinary job of accomplishing.”

BLUNT FORCE

How Emily Blunt's Rita Vrataski measures up as a Strong Female Character

Much has been made of the Strong Female Character of late, and for good reason. A recent study by San Diego State University found that just 15 per cent of all protagonists in 2013's top grossing films were female – an appalling statistic by any measure. But in attempting to bring more three-dimensional women to the big screen, is Hollywood missing the point? Some would argue that while seeing kick-ass ladies kick ass is a very good thing, the SFC is becoming a cliché in itself, creating a stereotype that just doesn't do film fems justice.

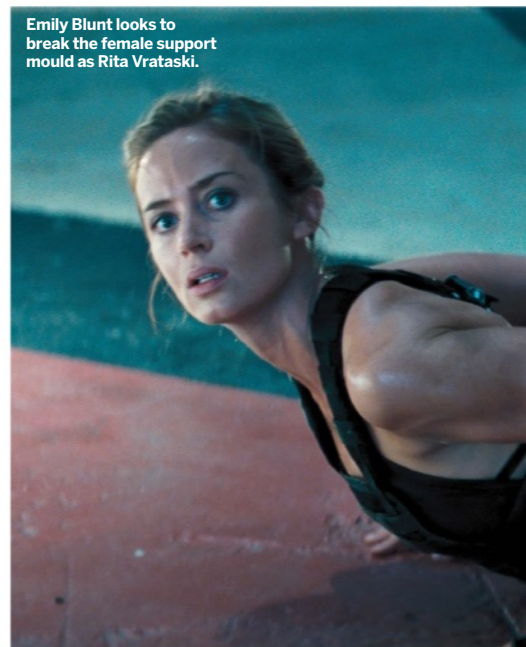
With that in mind, how many of the trope tick-boxes does Emily Blunt's heroine, Rita Vrataski, fulfil?

WOMAN WITHOUT FEAR

A true warrior, in a nod to the novel's Japanese origins, the Samurai-esque Rita has no fear of death. She laughs and says something sarcastic in the face of danger! Her life is expendable and she not only considers it inevitable, but even necessary, clearly showing us who the real hero of this film is.

A WARRIOR WITH WIT

We all know a woman who can kick butt is nothing without her wits, so it's a good job that Rita's got some smarts. While Cruise's Cage freaks out about his new-found power, Rita's the one who decides to use him to win the war against the Mimics with the help of her wise brain and cracking comic timing.



Emily Blunt looks to break the female support mould as Rita Vrataski.

GOOD WITH GUNS

Gone are the days where chicks in flicks would flinch upon being handed a firearm. Hand her a weapon and she'll show you how to use it, before ruthlessly blowing Tom Cruise's head off at point-blank range with barely a blink. Also, check out the glorious battle-axe that Rita's toting.

EMOTIONLESS HARD-ASS

Cool and collected, dispassionate and stoic, Rita is the antithesis of the overemotional damsel in distress so often seen on screen. Instead, she's fully focused on her mission, and as a result she's given the apt – but rather harsh – nickname of 'Full Metal Bitch.' Ouch.

GORGEOUS, NOT GIRLY

Carefully styled messy hairdo? Yep. Make-up that looks like she's not wearing make-up? Yep. Slightly dirty look about her as if she's been working hard at all this war stuff? Yes again. While Emily Blunt's movie-star good looks can't be denied, everything about Rita screams 'tomboy warrior' – especially the arm muscles.

Speaking of which, the film's stars are themselves an odd pairing: one justifiably described by Liman as "the biggest movie star in the world", and the other as "our generation's Katharine Hepburn." Cruise and Blunt aren't a pairing that most of us would automatically come up with, but it works, which speaks to both the director's casting nous and the cast's talents.

"Tom hasn't necessarily had the strongest female co-leads in his movies, and I think *Edge Of Tomorrow* definitely shows that he really shines when you give him a strong female counterpart," says Liman, who evidently holds both his stars in high esteem. "The chemistry was immediate. They're such different people from such different film backgrounds, and their characters on screen are like oil and water, so that dynamic was already there. They're both really funny, and from the first day we worked I was excited to go to the set every day. It was so much fun to be around them, and it was like that from the first second we got to rehearsal."

There's a role reversal here that we don't see very often, too. We all know Cruise as Mr Perfect, whether he's undertaking yet another ridiculous impossible mission or earnestly saving the world from something or other. But his *Edge Of Tomorrow* character, Lt Col

Bill Cage, is something else entirely: a complete wuss.

AN OFFICER BY VIRTUE OF HIS POSITION AS A MILITARY PR MAN, CAGE HAS NEVER SEEN A DAY OF COMBAT IN HIS LIFE. SO WHEN HE ACCIDENTALLY ENDS UP ON THE FRONT

lines of humanity's last desperate attempt to extinguish the alien threat and is cursed to relive it over and over again, he's far more interested in saving himself than the world. While it won't surprise audiences in the way his drug-addled Stacee Jaxx in *Rock Of Ages* did, it's a refreshing opportunity to see the actor do something new – and one he wholeheartedly threw himself into.

"What's awesome about Tom is that he's willing to go there – we're going to make something that's completely different, it's not a character you've ever seen him play before," says Liman.

"Tom is a brilliant comedic actor – truly brilliant. He's really the gutsiest, most courageous actor I've ever worked with, not just gutsy like he'll hang off the side of the Burj Khalifa; he'll be emotionally gutsy and try something he's never done before. He knows he has this brand, and he's willing to go completely against it.

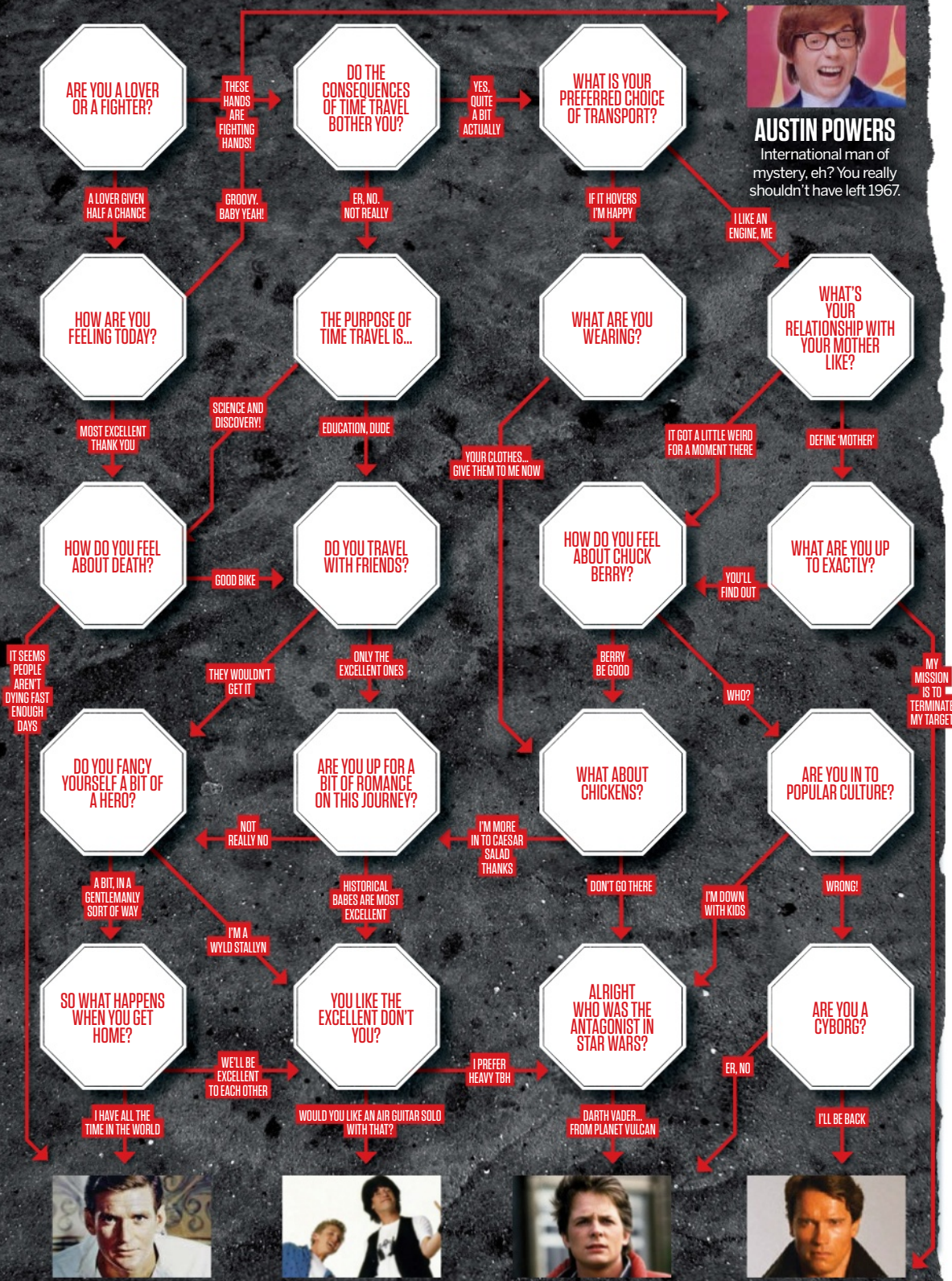
"It's not like working with Brad Pitt, who's made a lot of movies the mass audience wouldn't have seen. The world has seen

"ALIENS DON'T
NECESSARILY
BRING OUT THE
BEST CHARACTER
DEVELOPMENT"

DOUG LIMAN

KILLING TIME

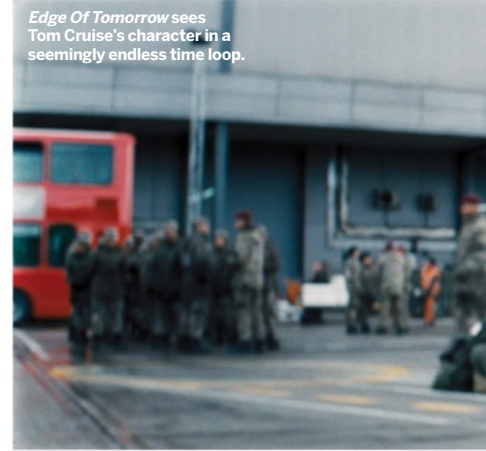
Find out whose days you're endlessly reliving with our handy flowchart



AUSTIN POWERS
International man of mystery, eh? You really shouldn't have left 1967.



Edge Of Tomorrow sees Tom Cruise's character in a seemingly endless time loop.



every movie Tom Cruise has ever done, so to have the opportunity to come up with a character he hasn't played before and a Tom Cruise you haven't seen before – and for a guy like that to, without hesitation, say 'Let's try it'. He's a total coward in this movie. Not just in the beginning; he's a coward the whole way through. And the number of times he squeals in the movie out of fear – he does an amazing squeal! Other movie stars, in my experience, would be more hesitant about being that vulnerable."

IN CONTRAST, EMILY BLUNT IRONICALLY PLAYS THE CHARACTER WITH BALLS. RITA VRATASKI IS A WARRIOR WOMAN WHO VOLUNTEERED TO FIGHT FOR THE WAR EFFORT, DOING SO WITH incredible alien ass-kicking success. What's more, she doesn't flutter her eyelashes or swoon on meeting Cage – she sees him as a tactical tool rather than a hot hero. She might not have a superpower, but she's the one who knows how to work a weapon, and she has absolutely no time for his reluctant reservations about learning to use one. There's a reason Rita's comrades call her 'Full Metal Bitch', and there's a reason Liman cast Blunt in the role.

"Emily is the only one we wanted; we didn't have a plan B," he reveals. "She's an extraordinarily powerful actress. She really stands her ground. Her performance is genius in this movie, and she has it the



H GEORGE WELLS

As a rather brainy sort, your dedication to science will lead to great things. But be warned – you may not like what you find in the future.



BILL AND/OR TED

Let's face it dude, you're really only in this for a bit of fun, and that's fine. But do try and learn something along the way, won't you?



MARTY MCFLY

You should have learned by now that time travel is a terrible, terrible idea. Stop going back and concentrate on the here and now.



THE TERMINATOR

Sure, you're a badass, with your super-strength, sunglasses and that shotgun. But you're also a bit evil. Perhaps it's time to reprogram.



Emily Blunt's character is more than a match for Cruise's Bill Cage.



Could this be the antidote to more generic sci-fi blockbusters?

toughest because she always has to go back to square one with her character.

"She's smart, funny, beautiful and quick – I can't think of another actress who has what she has right now. I really needed an actress who could be Tom's equal. I'm not into the hot chick on the lead guy's side; I like strong female characters, I wasn't interested in making a Tom Cruise movie with the flavour of the moment opposite him. I wanted a real foil, someone who could stand up to him and be smart enough to be his equal. I really couldn't think of anybody but Emily who could pull that off – it was about emotional strength and intelligence."

While the time travel element of *Edge Of Tomorrow* will elicit screams of 'Groundhog Day' from even the most laissez-faire film fan, there's a more relevant and perhaps even poignant parallel to be drawn. Liman is very purposefully echoing the events of World War II as we see the US join the extraterrestrial conflict towards its end. It's a never-ending D-Day with betentacled beasts in the place of Nazis; *Saving Private Ryan* with exo-suits instead of tommy guns. What's more, for once we see a Hollywood battle happen on a global scale.

"That direct parallel to World War II isn't a coincidence," Liman explains. "I loved doing an alien movie because you could have an enemy that was easy to identify, that was definitively the enemy – you didn't have to

"TOM CRUISE IS REALLY THE GUTSIEST, MOST COURAGEOUS ACTOR I'VE EVER WORKED WITH"
DOUG LIMAN

question the morality of it – and then you could focus on character and love stories behind enemy lines.

"We're saving Europe, we're not saving America. Which was a big question: would an American audience care if London gets overrun? Would the world care? These are questions we thought about. Ultimately, it was like, 'I care, so we'll make the audience care.' I wanted to set the film in Europe, I wanted to draw parallels with WWII – ultimately, war movies were my inspiration; I wasn't looking at science fiction movies."

INTERESTINGLY, LIMAN'S INSPIRATION FOR THE VILLAIN OF THE PIECE ALSO CAME FROM AN UNUSUAL SOURCE. VAGUELY DESCRIBED IN THE NOVEL AS LARGE "BLOATED FROGS" WITH FOUR legs and a tail, Sakurazaka's Mimics look a bit like starfish – the first creatures they encountered – and emulated – upon their arrival on Earth. They are fast and powerful, capable of firing rather handy, armour-piercing projectiles from their bodies.

"My inspiration for the aliens was a piece of video on YouTube that was a pulsing cube that was vibrating," says Liman. "I wanted everything about it to be alien to us – it doesn't breath or eat, it doesn't speak or walk on two legs. But it simple to quantify – this thing is just extremely good at killing human beings. It couldn't be like anything

we'd recognise on Earth. Because it's not a movie about them, so I didn't want to create something that you'd have to spend a lot of time getting to know and understand."

So what we have is an alien invasion movie that's not actually about aliens; a film that stars Tom Cruise completely in contrast with his usual typecasting, an indie actress in her first all-out, hard-ass action role, and a director who readily admits he that figured it all out as he went along.

Whether or not *Edge Of Tomorrow* subverts Hollywood's tried and tested tropes, it at least ought to be applauded for trying. The fact remains that a truly original idea is kind of hard to come by, and there are undoubtedly elements of this film that result in it being as derivative as many blockbusters, but Liman should be commended for his attitude and effort in attempting to create something new. Regardless of its success, there are still plenty of reasons to pay for a ticket.

As Liman puts it: "We have something for everybody. If you love Tom Cruise, you get Tom giving a genius performance. And if you hate Tom Cruise, he dies like 200 times in the movie." You can't say fairer than that. 

Edge Of Tomorrow is available on Blu-Ray from Warner Bros.



UNNATURAL DISASTERS



AFTER 60 YEARS AND NEARLY 40 FILMS, **THE ULTIMATE MONSTER IS BACK**. WITH A CAST OF INDIE HEAVYWEIGHTS AND AN OUTSIDER EDGE COURTESY OF **MONSTERS DIRECTOR GARETH EDWARDS**, GODZILLA IS BIGGER THAN EVER. EDWARDS AND STARS BRYAN CRANSTON, AARON TAYLOR-JOHNSON AND ELIZABETH OLSEN PAY HOMAGE TO THE KING OF THE MONSTERS...

On 3 November 1954, a fin broke the water somewhere off Odo Island, and 20,000 tons of hell followed with it. Released less than a decade after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that brought World War II to a halt, Ishiro Honda's *Godzilla* dredged scaly nuclear terror up from the Ocean and gave a wounded society something they could fight – a reptilian Nagasaki they could fire missiles at and construct scientific solutions to. Mankind could triumph over death, and the

power of the atom could be held up for the nightmare that it was, and arguably still is.

60 years later, a larger fin and a heavier weight will emerge from the depths courtesy of *Monsters* director Gareth Edwards. Despite the powerful emotional sting left by the opening scenes of Bryan Cranston breaking down in a nuclear facility, *Godzilla* has a wider target than exorcising one nation's specific nuclear trauma.

"Our film is not based on anything to do with Fukushima," asserts the director firmly. "It's [set] in a fictional city outside of Tokyo and happens 15 years ago, but that

said, it does deal with the genuine problem of around the world, we have these nuclear power plants and we benefit from it.

"It's an amazing thing, but when it goes wrong it really does go wrong in a big way, and I guess our film is about having this nuclear Pandora's box that we opened a long time ago, and we still police the world about – you can't have it, you can have it. The 'what if?' of this film is 'what if creatures existed that needed to feed on this stuff', so having it become a really bad thing rather than a good thing, that it's considered a bad thing." ➤

A dramatic scene from the movie Godzilla. The monster is shown rising from the San Francisco skyline, with its head and back visible against a fiery, orange-hued sky. The city's skyscrapers, including the Transamerica Pyramid, are silhouetted against the bright light of the monster's emergence. The water in the foreground is dark and choppy.

**"AS THE HUMAN RACE WE
DO ABUSE OUR POSITION
A LOT, AND HAVE NEVER
REALLY FACED THE
CONSEQUENCES"**

GARETH EDWARDS



Gareth Edwards reveals the secrets behind the Godzilla redesign



GODZILLA IS BIG

"The idea is to make him as big as you possibly can," explains Edwards. "He's technically 350 feet in the film. The way we arrived at that was we wanted him to be tall enough for you to see him wherever you were in a city, for argument's sake, but small enough so that he can be obscured sometimes, or else there's no fun in those scenes. It technically will make him the biggest Godzilla there's ever been."



GODZILLA IS LOUD

"He's a bit of a genius," says Edwards of sound editor Erik Aadahl. "He did *Transformers* with Michael Bay and *The Tree Of Life* with Terrence Malick, so his range is fantastic. It's what we were aspiring to with this, which is obviously a massive, epic movie, but we wanted the heart, soul and subtlety. We wanted to embrace the original classic roar, but obviously do it like Dolby 7.1 or Atmos [surround sound], and the original recording we asked Toho to send over just doesn't do justice to the cinema experience today, so we had to kind of reinvent it."



GODZILLA IS JUST RIGHT

"Weta [Workshop] in New Zealand didn't do the visual effects, but the design," says Edwards. "It mainly boiled down to me and an artist called Andrew Baker, who worked in 3D. I was in London and he was in New Zealand, he'd open up via Skype and I'd share his desktop. For me, it would be like 4am, and for hours we'd chat and he would rotate the model and just paint, push and pull shapes, and rotate it, and push and pull. We kept just pushing and pulling until one day we rotated it all the way round and went, 'Don't change anything – I think we've got it.' It took weeks and weeks of long nights, and that was our process."



➤ Cranston's nuclear physicist-turned-doomsayer Joseph Brody experiences the 'bad thing' well ahead of the rest of us when his wife Sandra (Juliette Binoche) is killed in a mysterious accident at a power plant in Japan, the *Breaking Bad* star watching in captivating anguish as she fades into the steam behind the blast door that he himself was forced to close. Brushing off all talk of natural disasters and meltdowns, he becomes a dogged campaigner to the truth, discovering in the process that it not only hurts; it walks, and it walks tall. Something has triggered a wave of killer kaiju – all beetle-like carapace and insectile limbs – that feed on radiation, prompting a rush to relocate nuclear stockpiles that finds our desperate physicist's son, Lieutenant Ford Brody (*Kick-Ass*'s Aaron Taylor-Johnson) on the frontline against the unnatural disaster his old man had been warning about. Ford's wife, Elle Brody (*Avengers: Age Of Ultron*'s Elizabeth Olsen) also comes

under threat, while David Strathairn (*The Bourne Ultimatum*)'s Admiral Stenz and Ken Watanabe (*Batman Begins*, *Inception*)'s Dr Serizawa shore up the heavyweight fringes of this apocalyptic family reunion.

It's big and bold science fantasy, sure, but *Godzilla* is shot with all the smoke clouds of realism that you'd see in a disaster or war movie, and that goes right back to the tense black-and-white armageddon of the source.

"When the BFI re-released a [DVD] version of the 1954 original, I bought it and realised how serious and good that version is," recalls Edwards. "It's all one big metaphor, really, for Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and is a very serious take on the monster movie, which is what me, Legendary Pictures and Warner Bros wanted to do for this. It took us a good year, if not a year and a half, to land on a story that felt right to everybody. Very much at the heart of our movie – which is at the heart of the original – is the idea of man versus nature."



Bryan Cranston and Aaron Taylor-Johnson play father and son Joe and Ford Brody.



Rather than Tokyo, the action takes place in a fictional location made especially for the film.

"I'VE BEEN SECRETLY STALKING GODZILLA FAN FORUMS TO SEE WHAT THEY MAKE OF OUR FILM"

GARETH EDWARDS

"As the human race we do abuse our position a lot, and have never really faced the consequences, and even though there is never going to be the threat of a giant monster coming out of the ocean, the physical consequences of it does happen; we do have tsunamis, we've had meltdowns at nuclear power plants..."

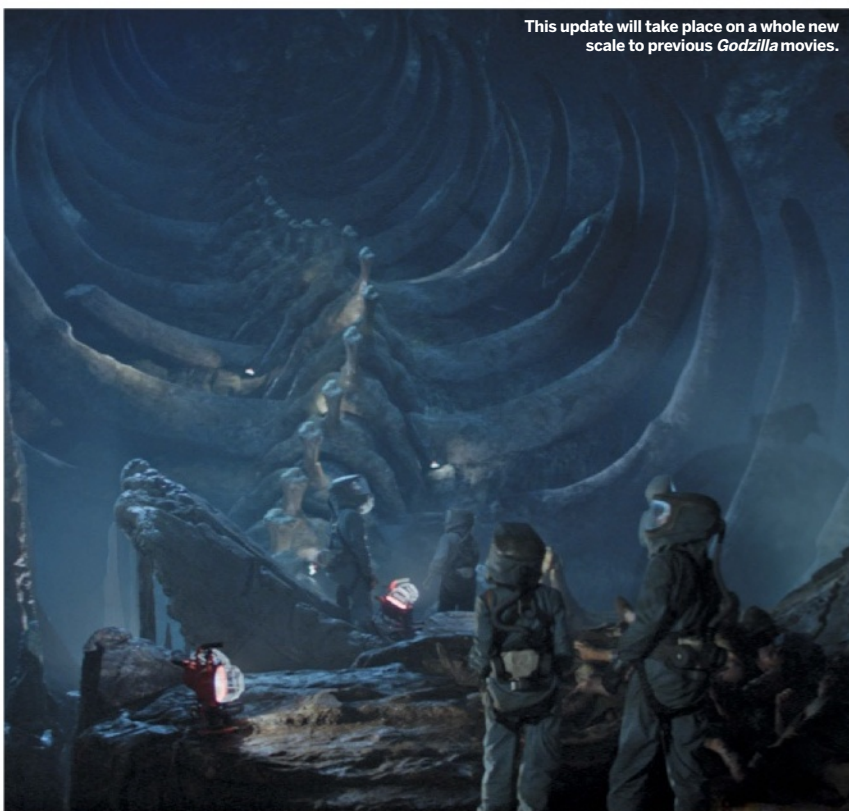
THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME THAT GODZILLA HAS STOMPED INTO HOLLYWOOD; IT WASN'T EVEN THE FIRST TIME WHEN ROLAND EMMERICH UNLEASHED HIS MUCH-REVEILED 1998 DISASTERPIECE ON THE WORLD. In 1955, the original movie was recut with American actors linking up the monster-suit devastation and released

in the US under the title *Godzilla Raids Again!*

Nor is it entirely fair to say that Western misadventures have dragged the brand through the dirt, despite the best attempts of the Hanna-Barbera *Godzilla* cartoon, featuring the titular terror's klutzy comedy nephew Godzooky ("That's the comedy go-to joke for all my friends about the film I'm making," beams Edwards. "They always call it 'Godzooky'").

No, the increasingly complex franchise has undergone three distinct periods in its homeland, all with their own particular and peculiar set of tropes, highs, lows and outright absurdities. Much of fandom is a feudal process driven by creator worship ➤

This update will take place on a whole new scale to previous *Godzilla* movies.



GODZILLA



AGE OF OLSEN

Scarlet Witch star Elizabeth Olsen on playing Elle Brody

Is it nerve-racking, entering a world that has been done so many times before and has such a legacy? What makes this different?

I think Gareth can be really proud of this, because this version really taps back into the whole reason the original *Godzilla* got made to begin with – at least that's what I have learned, about the wrath of nature, and not only nature, but how mankind is responsible for our actions and how that manifests itself in *Godzilla*. That's what this film is about, and what the original was about, and I think he should be proud.

What was working with Gareth like?

I've only been working for a few years, but something that I am constantly learning is to surround yourself with people that you feel okay with, and Gareth was incredibly collaborative, right from the first meeting, where he was saying, "Well, this is what we are working with, but that's only the beginning. I want to develop it with the actors." And that's what we did.

This is a pretty big movie for both you and him, coming from a background of mostly independent movies...

Before working on *Godzilla*, I had never been on a movie set like this before, but I always pictured it being heads of the studio and

the production company people swarming in and not letting the director do anything, and I always imagined them overshadowing a director's voice, but they never at any point did that with Gareth, because he had his shit together and he had his vision, and it was a good vision. It's crazy to go from a small, contained set where

you know every single person's name, to this set where you don't know most of the people, with most of the stuff happening without you seeing it. Gareth managed to do all of that seamlessly, and everyone felt taken care of.

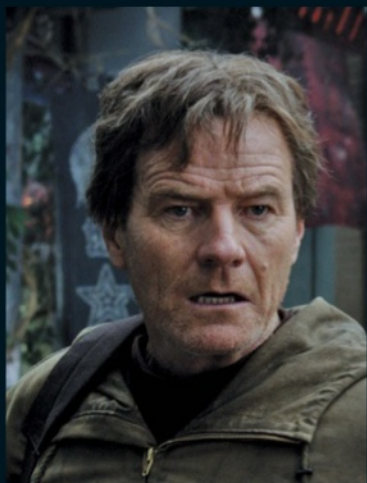
What scares you, aside from *Godzilla*?

Noises in the middle of the night.

"GARETH EDWARDS HAD HIS SHIT TOGETHER AND HAD HIS VISION"

THE LIFE OF BRYAN

Breaking Bad's Bryan Cranston on the all-new king of the monsters



Can you tell us about your character?

My character is a physicist working as an independent contractor at a nuclear power plant. He's all about the science of it, so when there is an anomaly of data that is being recorded he thinks it might be an earthquake at first, but then the patterns are too regular, so there is something happening here which he can't seem to find a scientific explanation for. Then he realises that it has nothing to do with physics, but it has to do with biology. Then he's like, "Wait a minute! I'm looking at it from a different point of view here," and he adjusts. Then he sounds the alarm and tries to warn everybody, even though he doesn't know what it is.

And your character is at odds with his son, right?

The relationship between my son and I is a typical one: there is an overworked dad who probably regrets the amount of time spent at work and missed opportunities with his son at home, and as he gets older that creates a rift that we have to figure out how to bridge and work together to battle this demon, so to speak.

When was the first time you discovered *Godzilla*, and what was your reaction?

My discovery of *Godzilla* was back in the Fifties, when the Raymond Burr movie [*Godzilla, King Of The Monsters!*] came out. Watching that on TV, it was astonishing, even for its time. It was amazing to see those special effects that were state-of-the-art at the time. I just loved it! For a boy to watch that, it was great destruction and a wonderful use of miniatures. I loved *Godzilla* more than, say, *King Kong*, because *Godzilla* didn't apologise; he just crushed things. That was the best. As a boy, I thought *King Kong* got soft and there were tears... no, just crush things, and there was the fire and everything. It was just more dramatic for me, more exciting.

How is this film different from that one?

Well, our tastes have become more sophisticated since then, and certainly now. That's what's so great about this version. There was careful concern to develop the plotlines and intricacies, and the character development. Without us – as actors and performers – getting into our roles, the audience wouldn't be invested either. What makes it more interesting for me is that I believe audiences will truly be invested in these characters, and riding with them through the tensions, fears and anxieties that the characters are going through. You'll feel it more, and it will ultimately be a better experience for you.

What was working with Gareth Edwards like?

That's another reason I am here. I saw his movie, *Monsters*, and it was impressive not only from a suspenseful point of view and from its storytelling, but for its restraint, very much like Steven Spielberg did in *Jaws*. It wasn't like, "Here it is! Here it is!" "Oh right, there it is." And there was also very strong character development in it. I really loved it. And it really is another reason why I am here. He asked me to see that movie, and I did, and we talked a lot, and he was very open to ideas and suggestions. He has a great combination for a director, and that is having a clear vision of what he wants, but at the same time being willing and able to be malleable, to be flexible in that. He can change and adjust to what he thinks might be a better idea or a better way of telling that specific point in the story. I said to him, "It's remarkable. You did a \$200,000 movie, and now you are doing a \$200 million. You have every right to be freaking out of your mind!" And yet he is calm. He hasn't taken on any external pressure. He is not freaking out; he's handling it quite well.

Finally, why do you think *Godzilla* is back?

The story of *Godzilla* resonates. For it to be able to go for 60 years, there is something about it that means you can recreate it and retell it in different ways, and it still has some resonance to it – that for some reason, people are drawn to it, generation after generation. At first, I think what it is, is the resiliency of the story, that it could be about imperialism or oppression, and in this story I think it's cautionary, actually. You look at the tale and you see the scope of it, and it's relevant to today's times. It's about harnessing power, dispersing of waste and messing around with Mother Nature. Can you actually do that and get away with that? How long can you get away with that? Living in that milieu is this creature that emerges from the muck and mire. It's very exciting.

"I LOVED GODZILLA MORE THAN KING KONG, BECAUSE GODZILLA DIDN'T APOLOGISE – HE JUST CRUSHED THINGS"



Director Gareth Edwards was chosen on the strength of his work on *Monsters*.

GODZILLA II: THE AFTERSHOCK

Gareth Edwards on the future of the franchise

Despite early chat about a return to Monster Island – the not-so-Pacific setting of 1969's *All Monsters Attack* – and some optimistic positing of a *Pacific Rim* crossover from Guillermo del Toro, Edwards is guarded about the prospect of a sequel. "It would be very arrogant to design this to be more than one film," asserts the director.

"The best chance you have of making another movie is making the first one as good as it could be, [so that] people don't have to have seen the previous *Godzilla* anything, and at the end there's not an expectation of anything afterwards.

"The original *Terminator* and *Back To The Future*, they went off and did other movies after, but they weren't designed to do that. They're just strong films on their own.

"If it does well then we'll have the conversation and figure out if we're going to do something else. We didn't enter into it that way."

fansites straight away, and they're all talking about it. Obviously, it's a goal for us that the fans embrace this film and consider it a true *Godzilla* movie.

"I didn't know what anyone was going to make of what we were doing. At the end of the day, you can't make a film for other people; you've got to make a film that you really want to sit and watch. That's the only way you can approach it, so you keep your fingers crossed that you've done the right thing in the eyes of other people, and what's been so nice recently about the trailer coming out is you get to read those reactions online, and they all seem really excited for it. I can't wait! I've never been to G-Fest, I can't see a scenario where I live my life and I don't go considering what we've done, so I'm sure I'll get to meet all of these people."

REGARDLESS OF HOW WELL THE MOVIE DOES, IT'LL ALWAYS BE A PART OF HIS LIFE, AND WHATEVER ELSE HE DOES, GAWDZILLA ON THE TOHO KINGDOM FORUM WILL ALWAYS remember him as the guy that once made a *Godzilla* film.

"That's what's funny," says Edwards. "When they started designing the poster, the marketing team presented like 30 options. When I looked at them I was thinking, 'Somewhere in here is a poster that I'll probably be signing for the rest of my life, even if nothing else happens, when I'm 60-something someone's going to ask me

➤ – George Lucas or Gene Roddenberry said it's so, and it is – and for *Godzilla* fans, there is simply Toho. The legendary, Tokyo-based film studio and distributor boasts a full roster that ranges from Akira Kurosawa's katana-drawing classic *Seven Samurai* and Studio Ghibli's environmental animated blockbuster *Princess Mononoke*, but outside Japan their name echoes with the furious bellow of *Godzilla*.

"I went over to visit them, and I didn't realise it, but they distributed *Monsters* in Japan – I had no idea," remembers Edwards. "So when I arrived, they gave me a copy of my own film and it had Toho on it, and I was like [his jaw drops in theatrical amazement]. I don't know why I didn't know about that. Then they gave me a whole tour of the studio, and I got to hold the Oxygen Destroyer, which is the device that killed *Godzilla* in the first movie.

"They felt like, I think, they didn't want to limit us creatively, but there were certain things that to them made *Godzilla* *Godzilla*, and there were about five of them. We were very careful to make sure we ticked all of those boxes.

"They weren't the five that you might think," Edwards continues. "We probably ourselves had 20 things, and then they probably did too, but they were kind and said, 'These are the five things that we feel you've got to do.' Things like the number of toes, what the origin is..."

If you're not already a massive *Godzilla* fan then you might not realise just how much of a following the character has. While popular culture acknowledges the first film as an undisputed classic, the rest of the canon is held up as a byword for goofy proto-*Power Rangers* monster battles and the subject of hazy memories of late Eighties/early Nineties visits to Channel 4 ("For a while, as a kid, I couldn't understand that they'd dubbed these things," Edwards remembers. "I thought it was just really bad audio"). The truth is that *Godzilla* has an incredible following all over the world, a passionate band who sustain incredible, fact-packed magazines like *G-Fan*, hold gatherings like G-Fest and covet super-rare action figures from Japan. Small of number but loud and decisive of forum post, self-confessed sci-fi fan Gareth Edwards and Legendary Pictures – the company that built their rep on dork-pleasing comic-book adaptations like *The Dark Knight*, *Watchmen* and *Man Of Steel* – know full well how important that geek voice is, even if they are likely to be discussing whether or not the 'Edwards *Godzilla*' could take down the *Final Wars* *Godzilla*.

"I think they're arguing about it now on the internet!" laughs the director. "I've been surprised. I've been secretly stalking those communities to see what they make of our film – they've been really on top of it. As soon as something breaks it's on the *Godzilla*

"I HAD NO IDEA TOHO DISTRIBUTED MONSTERS IN JAPAN, SO WHEN I ARRIVED, THEY GAVE ME A COPY OF MY OWN FILM AND MY JAW DROPPED"

GARETH EDWARDS



➤ to sign this poster.' And so that was my joke with the marketing guy: 'You've got to make this good, because I'm going to be looking at this for 30-odd years'. It was really funny [points at the teaser poster of *Godzilla* from the back, lost among the ruins of a city] when we turned to that one, it just felt really familiar – like I'd seen it a million times somehow, but I hadn't. There's no escaping this film at all, whatever comes of it."

Amazingly, despite having only one film to his name, Edwards was handed a summer blockbuster reboot of one of the longest-running franchises in science fiction. That one film was the verite creature drama *Monsters*, a fact that made film fans air-punch when his involvement was revealed, although it might have had the opposite effect on our old friend Gawdzilla.

"I think of some of them were dubious, because *Monsters* was very, very character-driven, and you never saw the monsters until the end," admits Edwards. "I think people

were worried that I was going to do that, maybe. I think the main thing is, if you're a *Godzilla* fan, your agenda would be to have the rest of the world become *Godzilla* fans, and the way you do that is by making a film that's as universal as possible, that everybody would get a kick out of and enjoy – not by making a really obscure, completely self-referential thing that would only appeal to a handful of people, and so my goal was that people who had never seen a *Godzilla* film – maybe didn't even know what it was – came out of this as fans and wanted to buy a toy or something," he laughs, "you know?"

The sub-\$500,000 *Monsters* is not only the sole point of comparison for Edwards' \$160 million tentpole, but if there were other options it would be an apt one, too – both are character-focused, kaiju-filled dramas that have both feet firmly planted in a world that isn't all that dissimilar to ours. Perhaps the biggest challenge for Edwards, then, is not how to make a 21st Century monster



AARON BOMB

Kick-Ass star Aaron Taylor-Johnson on playing Lieutenant Ford Brody

How does entering into this world of *Godzilla* feel, with 28 movies before you?

As far as I am concerned, we are wiping the slate clean and bringing it back to the original. The only one I have seen really is the 1954 one, as that was the one Gareth was drawing on, and even creating the *Godzilla* itself from. I had no real interest in seeing the recent one again. I have a bit of a memory of it and knowing it was pretty crap, so I had no interest in going back.

This is your first big Hollywood blockbuster. How is that?

With Gareth, it feels like an intimate, independent kind of movie. We didn't shoot it with 3D cameras or anything, so it's got a more raw feel. Gareth wanted to push it to this more emotional story, so you have something to relate to, and something more appealing than just a special effects movie.

Were you worried at all about it being a monster movie, that people were going to see it because of the 350-foot lizard?

I was a bit like, "Come on guys, this is not really what I was thinking about doing next; I was thinking about taking this time out. But it was Gareth that drove me into it. Then you get the list of Bryan Cranston, Lizzy Olsen, Juliette Binoche, and

you go, "OK, there is someone here who is trying to push the boundaries of blockbusters." He is trying to put something together that doesn't have to be shit. And yes, it's not the title role, and it's possibly being carried by the name of what it is, but that takes the pressure off. This wasn't your typical green-screen movie; a lot of it has been shot on location. They CGI-d chaos and buildings smashed up and shit, but that's the beauty of how Gareth works. He did that on *Monsters*.

Can you tell us about your character?

I play an EOD Navy Lieutenant, so my world was about researching, especially being British and playing an American military guy. I am also playing a young father, but I am

a young father, so that felt like a comfortable zone to be in, although he is finding it very difficult because he's never around. He has this pretty crap relationship with his father too, and that imitates how he is around his child. He needs to revisit the past and have his dad and him forgive each other for what they have been through to understand what he needs to do. While that is happening, the 'disaster' is happening around the world and splitting everybody up. There is that element of getting back to the one you love and trying to keep your family together.

"THIS WASN'T YOUR TYPICAL GREEN SCREEN MOVIE"



Hopefully this will fare better than the decidedly lightweight 1998 feature.

As always, the Statue of Liberty has a pretty bad time of it.

Expect more on a focus on the nuclear-related themes of the original film.

movie, but how to keep the focus on both the human characters *and* the title character, the Earth-scouring super-lizard that we unexpectedly root for as events unfold.

"There's definitely a different balance in this film," responds the director. "I go to the cinema a lot – before I started making this, I haven't been in a long time because of this film – but I used to go to the cinema a lot, and there's this feeling I had like when I was a kid that gets harder and harder to recapture as you get older, of the awe, wonder and majesty of fantastical films like this.

WE HAD TO PITCH IT TO THE STUDIO AT ONE POINT," HE CONTINUES, "SO YOU GO AND WE TOOK OVER THE WHOLE SPACE, POSTERS THE SIZE OF THIS WALL OF

pictures for the whole movie with drawings and concept art, and I had to tell the story to the execs and the producers to convince them that this was worth making. At the end I just ad-libbed, saying, 'Look, if you watch this film and don't nearly tear up, get goosebumps and have the hairs on the back of your neck come up, then I've completely failed, and I'm not interested in making a film that doesn't do that.' That's easy talk in a room, and they're like, 'Great, let's do it!'

"MY GOAL WAS THAT PEOPLE WHO HAD NEVER SEEN A GODZILLA FILM CAME OUT OF THIS AS FANS AND WANTED TO BUY A TOY OR SOMETHING"

GARETH EDWARDS



"In *Monsters*, I was trying to find a moment like that, and it came at the end of the movie," says Edwards. "The whole movie was one big build up to that. This film has an arc to it that peaks at the end; it's just a much bigger arc in that we're trying our hardest to balance progression of the movie so that we don't give too much that you get bored, and we don't give too little that you get frustrated.

"It's the ultimate art form; being allowed to do something like this – it's a mixture of music, photography, performance, writing and design, and things that work brilliantly as a three-minute moment, put together into two hours have a different effect. And so it's this one organic thing, it's not a load of separate things. That's the most difficult part, I think, to not make it into a series of set pieces, but make it a single story that takes you all the way to the end of the movie."

To go from a hands-on, micro-budget flick to a big-budget studio blockbuster in a single move is impressive enough, but the DIY ethic that characterised *Monsters* – in which Edwards not only shot the movie himself, but did all the VFX in post-production – has managed to carry over into a project that must be dazzling in its complexity for even the most seasoned director.

"You try and be involved in as many different areas as you can," Edwards admits. "It's exhausting. There're so many people that are brilliant at what they do, working everywhere 24-seven and trying to keep up with everything is impossible. It constantly seems that most of what you do all day long is mostly give feedback, answer questions and probably annoy a lot of people," he laughs. "It's kind of the way you affect the film, it's such a big machine, and you've got to constantly try and steer it, or else it'll just go off on its own course. I think films like this that work really well are always ones where the filmmaker has pushed with all their might to give it their voice, and I think audiences pick up on that when it doesn't feel generic. It feels like someone is trying to do something a bit different.

"I've been on anything as hard as this – it's just been non-stop for a minimum of two years straight of just constant... constant.

"I imagine having a child might be equal to this," he finishes, "but we've got a 350-foot child, and he takes a lot of clearing up after!"

Godzilla is now available on Blu-Ray.





THE BEST MOVIE POSTERS OF 2014

MOVIE POSTERS ARE OFTEN THE FIRST SELLING POINT OF A FILM. THERE ARE OFTEN TRENDS AND PATTERNS ARE PEOPLE FOLLOW AND THEN THERE IS JUST THE DOWN RIGHT BEAUTIFUL



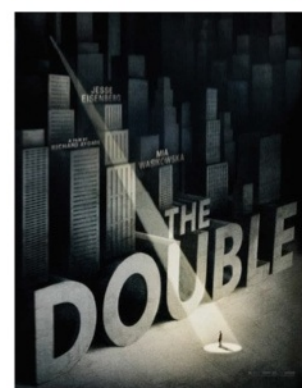
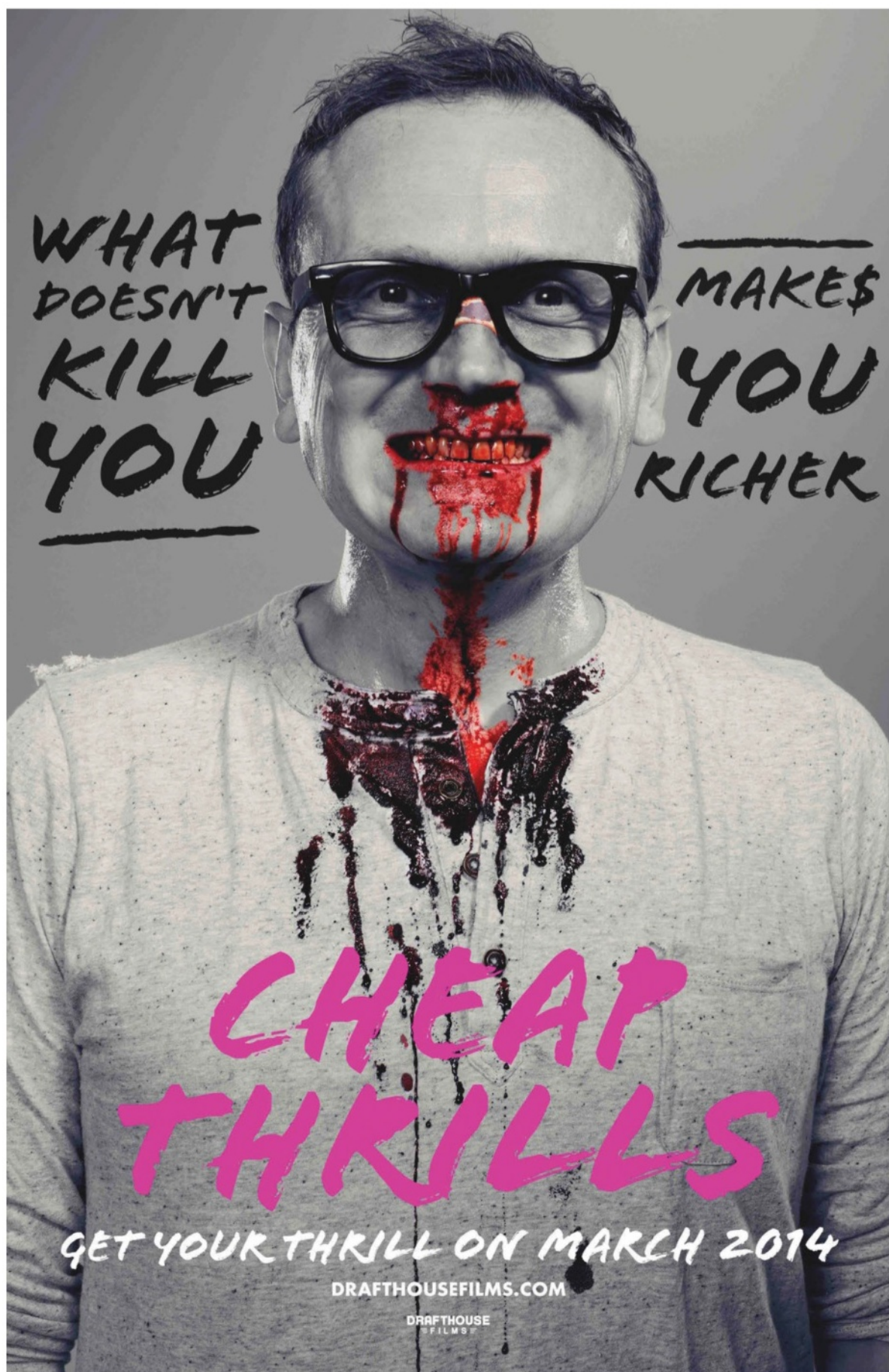
• Scarlett Johansson starred as an alien in the brilliant *Under the Skin*, it takes you into outer space it this beautifully artful poster



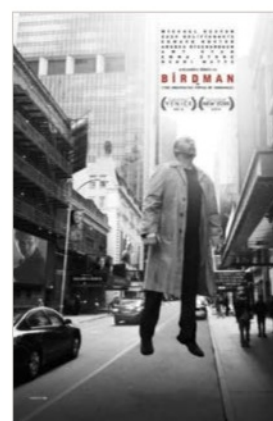


• Bold, oddly beautiful and a little bit creepy, the *As Above, So Below* poster creates a dizzying effect if you look at it too long.





• Hot pink was a definite theme of movie posters this year and here is a small selection of some of the best that abided by the trend.



• The artful representation of Daniel Radcliffe's new flick *Horns* depicts the cracks that are likely to be a theme within the film



THE ONLY WAY OUT IS WITHIN.

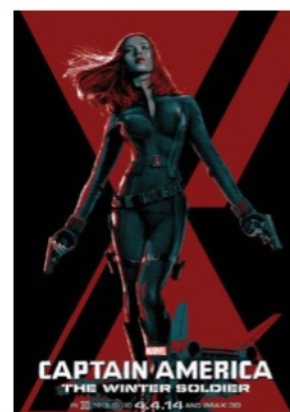
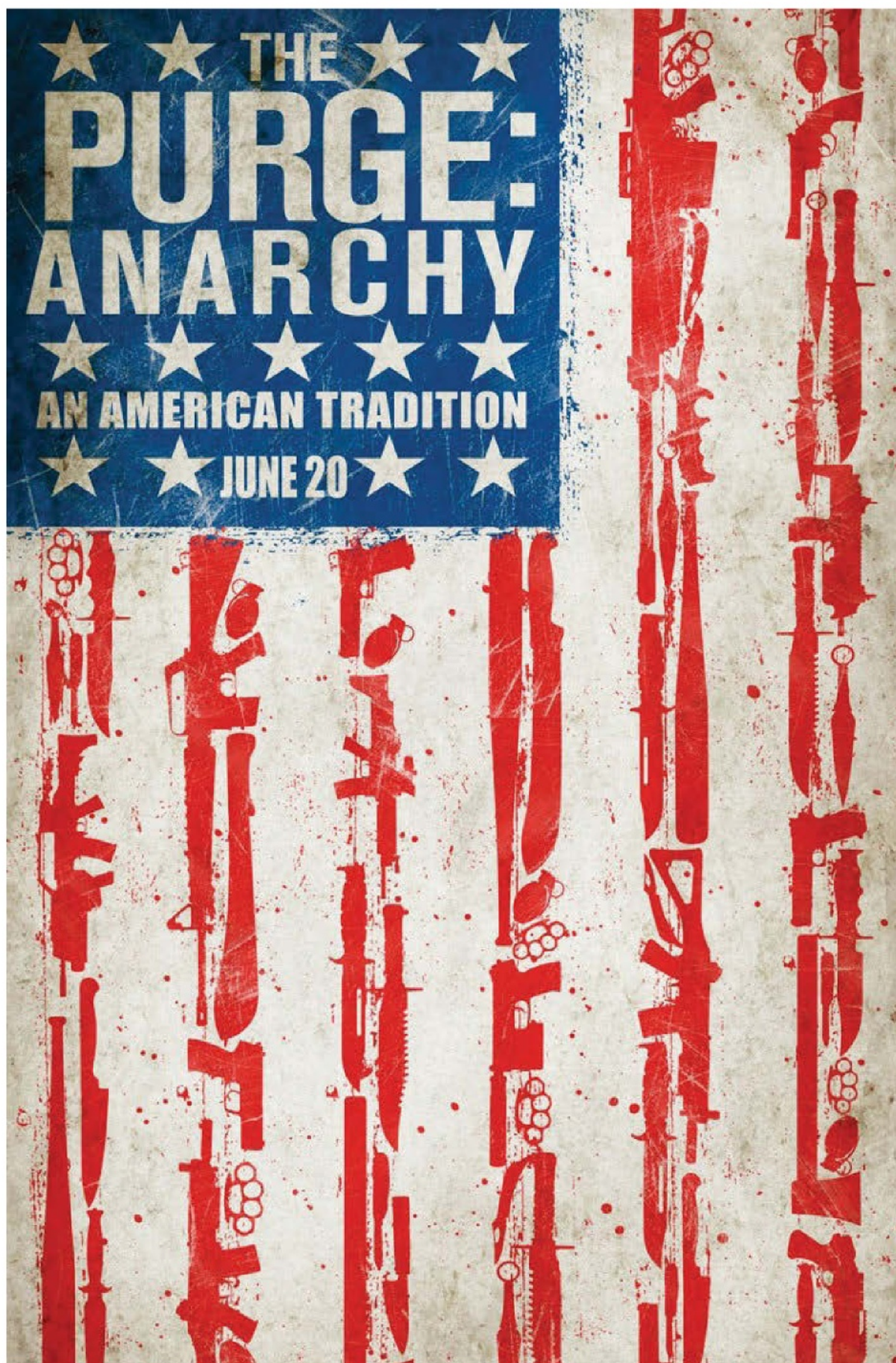
• This stand-out red design was vastly different from the other generic boys running posters that accompanied the film





• This series of posters depicting both the older and younger versions of the *X-Men* cast showcased just how well the younger incarnations were cast





- The make up of the American flag out of weapons was the stand-out political statement of the year with *The Purge: Anarchy* poster

Best TV of 2014

FROM EATING HEARTS, TO DEFENDING YOUR CITY, THE BEST TV FROM THIS YEAR

080 Hannibal

086 Utopia

092 Orphan Black

096 Game of Thrones

106 The Walking Dead

112 Sleepy Hollow

118 Arrow

126 Bates Motel

132 Gotham

138 Doctor Who

086



126



106





**"MY NAME IS OLIVER
QUEEN. FOR FIVE YEARS
I WAS STRANDED ON
AN ISLAND WITH ONLY
ONE GOAL – SURVIVE."**

118
080



“FANNIBALS
WHO ARE VERY
FAMILIAR WITH
THE LITERATURE
REALISE THAT
WE’RE ESSENTIALLY
THOMAS HARRIS
MASH-UP DJs”
BRYAN FULLER

Meat's Murder

WILL GRAHAM IS LEERING OUT OF THE LECTER MASK WHILE HANNIBAL HIMSELF ROAMS FREE AS A RESULT OF SEASON ONE'S SHOCKING CONCLUSION. CREATOR BRYAN FULLER SETS THE TABLE FOR SEASON TWO OF NBC'S STYLISH MURDER BANQUET...



THERE ARE A LOT OF SHOWS OUT THERE THAT MAKE GRAND CLAIMS ABOUT PUSHING THEIR TORTURED HEROES TO THE EDGE, BUT WE'D PUT GOOD MONEY ON BRYAN FULLER'S *HANNIBAL* BEING THE FIRST TO FEATURE ITS LEAD CHARACTER REGURGITATING A WHOLE HUMAN ear into a sink. "Right!" laughs Fuller. "We've gotta do something different!"

The first season of *Hannibal* was a revelation: gloriously gothic, wonderfully witty and deliciously dark. Fuller skillfully combined the Thomas Harris lore with his own vision for the show to create something that both honoured the source material and created something entirely new. The story of FBI profiler Will Graham (Hugh Dancy)'s descent into madness, propelled by his therapist Dr Hannibal Lecter (Mads Mikkelsen), was heralded by critics and fans alike as something very special indeed. When it was over, we had to wait out the inevitable cancellation discussions before NBC announced that it would return for a second season. The news was a tremendous relief to the hugely passionate fanbase of Fannibals that had built up, not to mention Fuller himself.

"Well, yeah!" he tells us. "So much work was done in the first season laying down the track to where we're going, so really it was about plucking the fruit from the seeds that were sown last year. There was a kind of energy to the second season because we knew

we had all these toys in the toybox to play with. The fun of it for us is tightly weaving the tapestry of the show so that you can really follow that thread back to the first season, so it was great to be able to continue to weave."

The first season left Will Graham in the darkest place imaginable, but with a glimmer of hope. He may have been imprisoned for Hannibal's crimes as the Chesapeake Ripper, with his boss Jack Crawford (Laurence Fishburne) and even his closest friend Alana Bloom (Caroline Dhavernas) convinced of his guilt, but he knows that his dapper therapist is the one to blame.

"The great thing is that he has no place to go but up, but that doesn't mean that up is not necessarily askew," teases Fuller. "When he launches his retaliation, for lack of a better word, against Hannibal, it is a very intricate design, and in some ways it takes Will in his thirst for justice into even darker territory than he explored in the first season. The difference is that the first season was very much against his will; he was being tragically driven and coerced by Hannibal's therapy and taking advantage of his encephalitis, and this season when he goes to dark places it's by choice. It's a different feel for him because it's very active in a way where he was very much a passive participant to the trip to hell that he took in the first season. This season he's definitely in the driver's seat." ➤



HANNIBAL'S CARVERY

Dr Hannibal Lecter is delighted to have the pleasure of your company. Our menu this evening is a la carte; any requests or dietary requirements will be ignored. Vegetarians should just go home.

AMUSE-BOUCHE

Black silkie chicken and mushroom soup

Chef notes: All mushrooms are freshly picked from our garden

ENTRÉE

Cold foie gras touchon

Chef notes: Sometimes suffering is necessary to create something beautiful

FIRST COURSE

Sausage scramble

Chef notes: A hearty dose of protein is all-important in the cold winter months

MAIN

Pork loin

Chef notes: Our pork recipe goes back centuries, although we'd ask you not to look up 'long-pig'

DESSERT

Angel cake

Chef notes: It's not the Angel cake you're thinking of



As of the end of Season One, Will Graham was behind bars.

➤ And what of his tormentor? One of the real delights of the first season was watching this growing friendship between the two men. From literally sniffing out his illness to attempting to push him away from the people he cares about, Hannibal clearly wanted to bring his patient around to his way of thinking. With Will imprisoned, Hannibal no longer has unlimited access to the man who was the closest thing he had to a friend. "I think he is very cognisant of the stages of Will's therapy and the levels of hell that he has to travel through to get to the true form of himself," Fuller tells us. "So he recognises that this is a necessary step in his development, and it's unfortunate that he has to be incarcerated to learn those lessons in how to be a better version of Will Graham, but Hannibal sees it as necessary to his recovery from humanity in a way!"

THIS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO MEN, WITH WILL BEHIND BARS AND HANNIBAL STILL ACTING AS A CONSULTANT TO THE FBI, FINDS FULLER AND HIS TEAM IN PREVIOUSLY UNEXPLORED TERRITORY. EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED IN THE SERIES SO FAR HAS BEEN

contained within a few sentences in *Red Dragon*, but last season saw Fuller start to toy with the previously established timeline just a little bit. Fans were stunned by the early appearance of characters like Dr Frederick Chilton (Raúl Esparza), while there was a two-episode arc dedicated to Jack Crawford's guilt over the disappearance of Miriam Lass (Anna Chlumsky), a young female trainee agent who bore more than a passing resemblance to a certain Agent Starling. For the most part, however, the Harris faithful have been pleased, a reaction that Fuller attributes to counting himself among them.



Season Two initially saw Hannibal filling in for Will.



Her relationship with Will having bordered on personal, it'll be interesting to see what's in store for Alana.





A TASTE FOR MUSIC

Bryan Fuller's favourite Hannibal moment

When it comes to picking a favourite baroque murder tableau from *Hannibal*, Bryan Fuller is spoiled for choice. "I've had quite a few," he explains. "It's easier for me to say, 'Ooh, that didn't work,' because most of them I see the merit in."

However, there is one that stands out, from the episode 'Fromage.' "I love the cello man, because it's one of my favourite instruments, and it just vibrates at the same frequency as my sternum chakra or whatever! It goes right to my chest and is very powerful, and to see someone turned into an instrument that way feels like an extension on how we talk about life and the body. There's a lot of influence from David Cronenberg in this show in terms of body dysmorphia and what flesh, spirit and life is."

"Well, I am very much a student of Thomas Harris," explains Fuller. "I love his writing and I love his pursuit of the purple turn of phrase, and we are constantly putting Thomas Harris quotes in the show to really re-infuse the DNA of the spirit of his writing. What's interesting is that as we get more and more into our own version of the stories, Fannibals, who are very familiar with the literature, realise that we're essentially Thomas Harris mash-up DJs."

"We are taking lyrics from one song and mashing them up with the music from another song and laying down a beat track from a third song and rubbing the vinyl in scenes in different ways, so it becomes not necessarily a literal translation, but a blend of different facets that are interpretations of things that happen in *Red Dragon* and *The Silence Of The Lambs*, and woven together in a way that we think is cool. Because of the way the rights work, it's not about the books as much as it is the characters, so that gives you a kind of broad swab of Hannibal Lecter's literary life to pull from, and we don't necessarily pull from it in any kind of linear way. It's more like a theremin as opposed to a piano."

Ah, the rights. One of the concerns with Fuller's ambitious six-season plan for the show – which will eventually incorporate not only the plot of *Red Dragon*, but also *The Silence Of The Lambs* – is that MGM still own the rights to some of the key characters. Fuller seems very calm about the situation, well aware that it's some way off. "We'll approach that when we get to that stage of the storytelling, but for now we just have the characters that originated in *Red Dragon* and

**"VENGEANCE
WILL TAKE
WILL INTO
EVEN DARKER
TERRITORY
THAN HE
EXPLORED IN
THE FIRST
SEASON"**

BRYAN FULLER



characters from the book *Hannibal* that are not Clarice Starling or related to her in any way, shape or form," he laughs.

Still, the fact that Fuller has the rights to the novel *Hannibal* means that this season will see the introduction of two of the most colourful characters into an already deeply purple universe: wealthy lunatic Mason Verger (played by Gary Oldman in the film adaptation of *Hannibal*) and his troubled sister Margot. The casting could not be more perfect, with *Ginger Snaps* and *American Mary*'s Katharine Isabelle and *Boardwalk Empire*'s Michael Pitt joining the show.

"I took a break from the editing room cutting their scenes in an episode, and they're both great," enthuses Fuller. "The scenes with Michael Pitt and Mads Mikkelsen have been so much fun to cut, because we've always talked about how Mason Verger has to be a bit of the Joker to Hannibal's Batman."

AS WE SAW LAST SEASON, HANNIBAL DOESN'T ALWAYS REACT WELL WHEN HE'S CHALLENGED BY ANOTHER MANIAC, WHICH MASON CERTAINLY IS. "HERE'S THIS GUY WHO'S IN THERAPY WITH HANNIBAL LECTER, BUT HE CLEARLY HAS NO TASTE FOR HIM," FULLER EXPLAINS.

"He just thinks he's an atrocious human being, and the last episode of the Verger arc is one of the darkest comedies that we've done on the show. Michael Pitt brings such a pimp quality to Mason Verger; the first time you see him he's dressed in this fantastic fur coat, and there's a little bit of *The Great Gatsby* meets Scott Disick. He's fantastically styled, and Michael had so much fun with the role. It's ➤



SERIAL STORYTELLING

Professor David Wilson talks Thomas Harris and real killers

Do you think the perception of serial killers as an American phenomenon is accurate?

No. Most criminologists would see the beginning of the phenomenon as Jack the Ripper in 1888. What gave the interest in serial killing a bigger push was the FBI's Behavioural Unit, which was what *Red Dragon* was modelled on. Thomas Harris worked with the FBI, which was looking for more funding. They used the idea of there being more serial killers as a way of pushing forward their demands for greater resources. We date the phenomenon from a British murderer who was real, but the thing that gives us push and momentum is, I think, the stories of Harris based on the profiling done by the FBI.

There does seem to have been a shift from the early Nineties to what we have now.

When *The Silence Of The Lambs* started, we wanted to know the story through Clarice Starling or Will Graham, and by the time we have *Hannibal* we have become engrained in his world. He is a psychiatrist, aesthete and Renaissance man, and talks about fine wines and foods. I think the change of *The Silence Of The Lambs* from when it was first released – when the heroes were the FBI – to what the genre became is an interesting arc in relation to the viewer or reader's attraction to these stories.

Do you think serial killers are our modern mythology?

The public seem to be fascinated by serial killers – not so much by the reality, but by the mediated image. Often, they are attractive personalities, and even flawed serial killers on TV shows like *Dexter* seem to attract people into their world, as opposed to the reality – which, of course, is disgusting.

David Wilson is professor of Criminology at Birmingham City University and an author.



With his professionalism under in question, Jack starts the season in a difficult place.



With such deviations from the books, anything is possible.



Will Hannibal Lecter's mind games finally catch up with him?

➤ been delightful to cut him because he is trying everything and really embracing the kind of haute-creep capacity of this character, and it's really exciting. I'm eager for people to take a peek at what he does, because I think it will be certainly iconic in the Thomas Harris legacy of these characters."

IT'S AN ENTICING PROPOSITION, AND ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF FULLER BOTH HONOURING AND EXPANDING THE HARRIS UNIVERSE. HOWEVER, AS WITH ANY BRYAN FULLER SHOW, THERE'S ALWAYS THE ANXIETY THAT IT'S NOT GOING TO LAST FOREVER. NBC HAVE PROMOTED THE SECOND SEASON OF

the show a lot more intensely than the first, and Fuller tells us that he's thrilled with their treatment of his baby.

"Yes, absolutely," he stresses. "NBC has always been very supportive of the show, and particularly when you see the second season they've really allowed us to tell the story that we wanted to tell with the elements that we needed to tell it. They realise that we are psychological horror, that we are a very cinematic representation of the *Hannibal* story, and they have been very generous with Standards and Practices and allowing us to go places that no one would allow us to go on any other broadcast network. So they have been incredibly supportive."

While we can all revel in the fact that Fuller's vision arrived on our screens undiluted, it's easy to forget how it could all have gone horribly askew in the wrong hands. "I never thought about, 'We have to prove that this a valid television show' as much as I wanted

to bring a sense of elegance and psychological horror to an episodic story," Fuller remembers. "I love psychological horror, and I think there's a different vibration of modern horror that is now kind of circling back around from a lot of the more egregious 'torture porn' aspects to really interesting, innovative turns on the ghost story, returning to these creepy, undulating psychological horror movies."

"So I was really excited about a psychological horror that is a meditation not only on death, but the nature of male friendships, and that was really intriguing to me, and that felt like it was a different point of view to explore this character and what he is like in society with the capacity for friendship. That felt like it was a turn on the character that I hadn't seen yet, and thought we could add to the mythology as opposed to just being redundant."

It's a take that fans and critics have fallen in love with, and Fuller stresses the importance of the Fannibals' continuing support. "The ratings for the show in the US are not great," acknowledges Fuller. "But the critical acclaim for the show has been very strong, we have a very passionate fanbase, and it was because of the critical acclaim and the passionate fanbase that we got a second season, so we're hoping that we're able to ride that wave into a third season."

We've got our napkins ready. ☞

Hannibal: Season Two is available on Blu-Ray.





HANNIBAL DOT-TO-DOT THIS IS MY DESIGN

WILL GRAHAM HAS FINALLY DECIPHERED THE FIENDISH DR HANNIBAL LECTER'S DESIGN, BUT NOBODY ELSE BELIEVES HIM! CAN YOU INTERPRET THE MESSAGE HE'S LEFT YOU TO FIND OUT THE IDENTITY OF THE NOTORIOUS CHESAPEAKE RIPPER?



MAD WORLD

THE STEALTH SCI-FI HIT OF 2013, CHANNEL 4'S DARK AND DISCOMFORTING COMIC-BOOK **CONSPIRACY THRILLER** **UTOPIA** GAINED CRITICAL ACCLAIM, CONTROVERSY AND A HBO REBOOT FROM FIGHT CLUB DIRECTOR DAVID FINCHER. **WE WENT ON SET FOR SERIES TWO WITH CREATOR DENNIS KELLY AND STAR ALEXANDRA ROACH...**

THE ABANDONED, HALF-BUILT HOTEL LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF THE SHINING: ITS FLOOR AN EERIE, GARISH MIX OF RED AND GREEN, AND THE EXTRACTOR FAN FILLING the room with the smell of a nearby KFC. In the middle sits a man many will recognise as the Emperor from Star Wars: Ian McDiarmid. Today, he plays a mysterious, dishevelled man called Anton, who cannot speak English, and has been picked up by – as fans know them – Ian, Becky and Grant. “Pansh familiii!,” he occasionally shouts. “Pansh familiii!” A Romanian translator, Marius, tells them that it means “five families”. Marius goes on to be shocked by what he’s translating. He’s nervous and – like everyone else involved here – out of his depth. The last thing he translates is “dovada”, which means “proof”. The last thing he says is, “Eh? Why you got a fucking gun?”

This is the set of the second series of *Utopia*, a show that in January of last year cut a figure like no other on the landscape of British television – looking like nothing else, sounding like nothing else and written like nothing else. It’s set in Britain, but not a Britain we know. Instead, it is a stylised hyper-world of bright Technicolor and startling symmetry; a brutal and often blackly funny story of a fictional graphic novel called *The Utopia Experiments*: a comic written by a madman genius called Philip Carvel that is said to have foretold many of the world’s biggest disasters.

When an original manuscript for its fabled, unreleased sequel falls into the hands of five mismatched fans from an online forum, however, things start to get out of hand. As they are ruthlessly hunted down by The Network, a secret organisation that, as well as being omnipresent, has no qualms

about committing the most barbaric of atrocities. The group’s chief assassin is Arby, played by *Kill List*’s Neil Maskell, a rotund, almost infant-like killer who most absolutely cannot be reasoned with.

It starts as an on-the-run thriller. The gang – made up of IT consultant Ian (*Misfits*’ Nathan Stewart-Jarrett), weary student Becky (Alexandra Roach), conspiracy theorist Wilson Wilson (*Four Lions*’ Adeel Akhtar), tearaway teenager Grant (Oliver Woollford) and the enigmatic Jessica Hyde (Fiona O’Shaughnessy) – are pursued by Arby and sharply dressed partner Lee (Paul Ready), who in the first episode tortures Wilson by rubbing chilli, sand and bleach into his eyes in turn, before removing one with a spoon. But then the mystery of why The Network wants the manuscript begins to unravel, and things become far more unsettling. For hidden in the manuscript



➤ is Janus, a formula that will solve the impending doom of an over-populated planet by sterilising the human race. In one episode, a member of The Network reveals it as: "We've now passed seven billion on this planet. When I was born, it was a little over two. Food prices rising, oil's ending. When our resources end in 20 years, given everything that we know of our species, do you really think we're going to just share?"

IT'S A SLEDGEHAMMER SCENE; THE MOMENT WHERE THE BRIGHT, COOL, FAST-PACED STORY OF GUNS AND COMICS BECOMES A DENSE MORAL DILEMMA THAT

challenges the very ethics of its audience, characters and even its creator and writer, Dennis Kelly. The brains behind the series is best known for the cult BBC3 sitcom *Pulling* and the awards-laden stage adaptation of Roald Dahl's *Matilda* (co-written with Tim Minchin).

"Originally, Kudos [*Utopia*'s production company] came to me with an idea

of a conspiracy hidden in a graphic novel," Kelly explains, overseeing the set today in Leeds. "The conspiracy was different, though; it was about mind control. I wasn't keen on that. The over-population issue was interesting to me, as it's something I have no answer to. My politics are a bit liberal, a bit wishy-washy; 'Why can't we all be nicer to each other?' That sort of thing. But there is nothing in my politics that had an answer to over-population; it's a genuine problem we all face, and we have no idea what to do about it. All of the answers that we can think of are horrific."

That horror is fully realised in the 'means to an end' methods of The Network, who operate under the belief that a few deaths now will save millions from war and starvation in the future. Arguably, the apex of this ideology comes in the third episode of Series One, which opens with Arby massacring a school full of children in order to frame Grant (who they can't track down) for the

shooting. It was ill-timed, however, with the Sandy Hook school shooting – in which a man fatally shot 20 children and six adult staff members – happening only a few weeks before the episode aired. Although obviously inadvertent, it was more than enough for the show to gain a controversial reputation for being violent.

"I don't have a problem with violence," he says. "I think people who have a gripe about violence should just go fuck off, to be honest. I think it's strange that people have a bee in their bonnet about violence in drama when we've been using violence in drama for thousands of years. What they're really saying is, 'I don't like your type of violence.' Violence is always shocking. Whenever I've seen it in real life, it's always shocked me. So it should be the same on TV. The only violence I find offensive is the violence that doesn't offend me. I want to be disgusted by violence. I shouldn't be looking at it in a pornographic way, like, 'Yeah, I love watching this guy get his eye pulled out.'"

"Also, a lot of stuff that is very serious doesn't do much for me. It feels a bit po-

"IT'S STRANGE THAT PEOPLE HAVE A BEE IN THEIR BONNET ABOUT VIOLENCE IN DRAMA WHEN WE'VE BEEN USING VIOLENCE IN DRAMA FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS"

DENNIS KELLY

Expect to see more of the enigmatic Arby in Series Two.





BECKS TO THE FUTURE

Alexandra Roach on what's next for Becky

Fan-favourite Becky is among the returning cast.

Can you give us a gist of what's in store for Becky this season?

The last time we saw Becky she had ran away from Ian and Grant at the train station. Things have taken a turn for Becky, though; she's been having fits more regularly, but she's tracked down Jonathan [her dealer], who's been giving her drugs, so she's basically been following him around. Then Ian and Grant track her down and everything goes to shit again.

Utopia's over-population dilemma is quite a heavy topic. What were your feelings on it?

We all sat down and had a big discussion about it, and it's such a personal thing to talk about. That's what's great about this program: it throws these themes and massive issues right in your face, and you think, 'Oh hang on, how do I actually feel about that?' It pushes you to feel uncomfortable within your own thoughts, and I don't think that's a bad thing for a TV show to do.

What are your thoughts on the HBO remake?

We haven't heard hardly anything about it, but it's exciting. It'd be strange to see someone else play Becky. This is the first time I've played a recurring character. When I came back for Series Two, it felt like I really knew her better, and it felt really organic and natural, so I feel like I own her! To see somebody else do their version... I don't know!

faced: 'We're going to talk about a serious issue in a grown-up, mature way.' I liked the idea of being able to do quite grown-up stuff and make it more accessible and action-y. My theory is: if you can't be brutal at 10pm on Channel 4, where the fuck can you do it? There are plenty of other places in the schedule where we can watch people dress up in costumes from the past and be polite to each other."

ALTHOUGH A HUGE PART OF ITS PLOT, THE MASS STERILISATION IS ONLY REVEALED AROUND TWO THIRDS OF THE WAY THROUGH UTOPIA'S FIRST

six-part series. In Series Two, however, The Network's conspiracy is set to open up further, especially in the first episode, which is – unconventionally – set entirely in the Seventies, suggesting that new cast members Rose Leslie (*Game Of Thrones*), Tom Burke, Michael Maloney and Trystan Gravelle could be playing younger versions of current cast members.

"The mystery of the manuscript has been solved, so it's all upfront now," explains Kelly. "As much as you don't want people stopping the action for a quick monologue about declining fish stocks, it allows us to explore it all a bit more. So we start off in the past and see the making of The Network, how it came to be and what their problems were. They sort of came together and then fell apart, and that fallout is really what the series deals with. You get to see Jessica and

Arby [revealed in Series One to be Carvil's children] as little kids... and that sort of follows through as well. In a strange way, there's a family story at the heart of it; a bit of a weird family story.

"Also, I love what Mark Munden [*Utopia's* director] has done with it visually. It sort of feels like *Utopia*, but completely different. It did make me look at it and think, 'I want to see the series set in the Seventies now!' For me, it's the best episode we've ever done."

After the opening prequel, the series snaps back to a present where the gang are still reeling from Series One's finale, which after a hollow victory against The Network, saw Jessica captured, Wilson switching allegiance and Becky – after suffering a fit from her debilitating illness – leaving behind Ian and Grant. What's impressive is that throughout the series, as the facts began to emerge and gather, Kelly's characters have grown and developed believably, never doing anything stupid for the sake of plot or acting out of character. So what's next?

"They start off very desperate this series," he explains. "Especially for people like Wilson Wilson, who is now sort of ensconced with The Network. For him, it's about how far he'll go and what he's willing to do, and what he believes is the right thing to do. And then you've got Ian, who's back to his normal life. Him and Grant are living together, hating each other, sort of looking for Becky. That's what the second episode is about: them trying to find her. But strange alliances are formed in this episode and at ➤



Expect flashbacks to play a big role in Series Two

A (GRAPHIC) NOVEL LOOK

How *Utopia* achieved its uneasy comic-book cinematography

When Dennis Kelly was writing *Utopia*, he had no idea that it would end up looking like a real-life comic-book. "Marc Munden made it way better than I ever could have," he says. "He took my starting point and then applied his own imagination. When I saw what he was doing, I just thought, 'Fuck me, this is great.'"

With a distinct use of colour, the director of *Utopia*'s first three episodes laid down a visual tone like no other on television – achieved, he says, through using the three-strip Technicolor palette of Fifties Hollywood.

"Normally, the way you'd grade a piece of cinematography is by constructing it with greens, blues and reds," Munden explains. "The three-strip Technicolor process we use is comprised of the opposite colours: yellows, cyan, magentas. I was interested in those Doris Day films from the Fifties that push those distinct elements."

The result is a strikingly vivid look that gives shots – like a corn field in Series One – the feel of a heightened world. It's an aesthetic that's also honed by Munden in post-production with grading software for secondary colour correction, allowing him to manipulate and almost hand-paint shots to his specification.

"It always felt as even though [the protagonists] live in the real world, they're always behind the scenery, in these idiosyncratic places which are not everyday places," he says. "That gives it the comic-book shock. That's why the best cartoons feel very real. As long as the script and performances are strong, you can push the other physical elements quite a way before the plausibility starts to fall apart."

"AS MUCH AS YOU DON'T WANT PEOPLE STOPPING THE ACTION FOR A QUICK MONOLOGUE ABOUT DECLINING FISH STOCKS, SERIES TWO ALLOWS US TO EXPLORE THE WORLD A BIT MORE"

DENNIS KELLY

The last we saw of Wilson he'd joined The Network



➤ the beginning of the series. They are kind of on the run, but they're a bit more savvy about it all now. Last time, they had no idea what the hell was going on, and they were just trying to live and not be dead. This time they're a bit more grown up."

Back in the abandoned hotel, it's a surreal sight to see sci-fi legend McDiarmid scrambling around erratically and shouting gibberish, his trademark Emperor Palpatine growl barely audible underneath the distress. Today is the filming of the fourth episode, so details on how Ian, Becky and Grant have come to know Anton or his relevance to the plot are scarce. Kelly does tease, though, that "Anton holds the key to why they're being chased. The difficult thing about them getting the answers, though, is that he appears to have lost his mind and is speaking an unintelligible language, which is actually true: Ian learned snippets of two languages and then kept shoving them together in random ways."

Given the mental demands of learning, memorising and executing lines made up of

two languages, McDiarmid understandably declines an interview request. Even so, his very involvement in *Utopia* is testament to how groundbreaking and critically acclaimed its first series was – even if, despite a blaze of pre-show publicity, that didn't necessarily translate into huge ratings for its 10pm slot.

AND YET, UTOPIA HAS RIGHTLY EARNED ENOUGH CULT RESPECT TO JUSTIFY AN AMERICAN REMAKE. USUALLY, THAT WOULD BE ABOUT AS WELCOME AS

being asked, "Where is Jessica Hyde?", yet this is not your *Skins* or *Spaced* remake; this is being made by HBO, written by Gillian Flynn – author of acclaimed novel *Gone Girl* – and directed by David Fincher of *Fight Club*. These are people who know what they are doing.

"I'm quite hopeful," Kelly chuckles. "My view is that with what I write, I don't know if I'm ever really going to get big audiences. That's just who I am. I think there's a version of *Utopia*, though, that can be a bit broader, and also maintain the

edge. If you think about someone like David Fincher, he's capable of doing a film like *Fight Club*, and those films are able to reach a lot of people but still maintain its edge. And Gillian Flynn; she's really smart, and I think she'll open it up in certain ways. They'll find different stories to pull out of it, because there'll be more episodes. I'm pretty chuffed!"

"The one thing I feel about *Utopia*, though," he continues, "is there's nothing on like it on this side of the Atlantic or the other. I'm not saying it's the best thing in the world, but it's its own thing. I think the UK can make great TV, but we look at what someone else is doing and think, 'Oh, we'll do one of those.' But I think we can be confident; we are good TV makers. Love it or hate it, *Utopia* is its own thing."

Utopia Series 1 is available on Blu-Ray.





WHERE IS JESSICA HYDE

WHERE IS JESSICA HYDE? WHERE IS JESSICA HYDE? WHERE IS JESSICA HYDE?



?



WHY YOU SHOULD
BE WATCHING
ORPHAN BLACK

CLONE

ORPHAN BLACK'S BREAKOUT STAR **TATIANA MASLANY** CHALLENGES AND THRILLS OF THE SHOW AND

IT'S HARD TO THINK OF ANY ACTOR WHO HAD A TOUGHER JOB LAST YEAR THAN TATIANA MASLANY. BEING THE SERIES LEAD OF A NEW SHOW MUST BE TOUGH WORK – AND

When you're playing at least four of them, often in the same scene, that's a whole other level. Her performances as the hunted clones of *Orphan Black* made it the must-see sci-fi debut of the year, and it doesn't look like Season Two is going to give her (or us, for that matter) the chance to relax.

"My body doesn't react to it with panic anymore!" laughs Maslany when we discuss the prospect of filming a sequence in which the fiery former street urchin Sarah, unstable soccer mum Alison and warm-hearted science geek Cosima sit down for a discussion about who or what is coming after them. "I know what it's going to be, and I know we can do it and I know that the effects are incredible and it'll work, so it's more about continuing to make it feel as real as possible."

Possibly the biggest compliment that you can pay Maslany – and *Orphan Black* – is how easy it is to forget that it's the same actor playing all these characters. In addition to the leads named above, the show has required her to play characters ranging from German party girls to icy corporate heads, not to mention psychotic Russian killer Helena, with

the prospect of more clones to come in Season Two.

In fact, the roles are so different that when *Orphan Black* shifts focus, it also shifts tones. One of the great things about the show is that there is this sense of constant movement and energy, and Maslany tells us that it's very much present on set too. "Totally, totally!" she enthuses. "We've talked about that on set this season a lot. It's just like I walk on set one day and we're shooting Alison all day and the colours are different and the tone is so different, and there's this room for comedy and heightened suburban hysteria! And then we'll shoot a day with Sarah, it's like drama and family and darker, and the stakes aren't higher necessarily, but they're just different. It does feel like – the crew also says this all the time – it feels like we're shooting a different movie every single day. Yeah, so fun!"

So regarding what we can expect to see from *Orphan Black* in Season Two, there's a lot of ground to cover. Given that we met Sarah first in the pilot, let's begin with her. The first season saw her fighting to earn the right to get her daughter Kira (Skyler Wexler) back from her wary foster mother, Mrs S (Maria Doyle Kennedy), before fighting to keep Kira away from the forces that were coming after her while infiltrating the police force

WOLF

MASLANY TELLS SCIFINOW ABOUT THE WHY SEASON TWO WILL ONLY GET TOUGHER...

as the deceased clone Detective Beth Childs, and discovering that they were caught between the Neolutionist gene-tamperers and the Proletheans, who want the clones dead. With Mrs S, Kira and her sharp-tongued but big-hearted foster brother Felix (Jordan Gravis), Sarah arguably had the biggest support base last season. However, she also had the most to lose, as the season finale showed us when Sarah returned home to find Kira and Mrs S gone.

SEASON TWO STARTS OFF WITH SARAH ON THE RUN TRYING TO FIND KIRA, AND WE DON'T KNOW WHERE ANYBODY IS," TEASES MASLANY. "THE RELATIONSHIP WITH MRS S is obviously left in a very suspicious and complex place, and it doesn't really become much clearer as we go on. It just becomes more and more complicated, which is so nice to play with these characters who are so alike and need and love each other so much, but we don't know who's side anybody's on. Even as actors we're always negotiating a new dynamic between us. It keeps us on our toes."

Sarah's not the only clone who found herself in a dark place by the season finale. Although her lover Delphine (Évelyne Brochu) is no longer her monitor, having broken ties with the sinister Neolutionists, Cosima is suffering

from a degenerative illness and is hunting for answers. Her search brings in new clone Jennifer Fitzsimmons, a former Olympic swimmer who fell victim to the same disease, which gives Maslany another new character to bring to life. "It's a mix, it's definitely a mix, right down the middle," laughs Maslany when we ask how it feels to get a script with yet another character to play. "It's super exciting to get to play somebody new and investigate another life. But it's a daunting thing to do during shooting; the schedule is so intense as it is, and then to try to bring a new life out is a technical nightmare a little bit. But ultimately it's what I signed up for and what I love about the job, and what keeps me totally inspired every single day on the set."

Meanwhile, saying Alison is in something of a transition is an understatement, after she shocked us all by simply watching her frenemy Ainsley choke to death in her kitchen without lifting a finger to help her. ➤

"IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE SHOOTING A DIFFERENT MOVIE EVERY SINGLE DAY"

TATIANA MASLANY

“Yeah, that shocked me so much, and it still kind of shocks me!” agrees Maslany. “When I read that in the script I was like, ‘Oh God, what are we doing? What’s going on, no no no! This can’t happen!’ But then I realised, ‘No, this puts her in the most impossibly difficult position.’ It stretches her to an extent that I don’t think I could have predicted. It’s so out of left-field, and yet it makes so much sense in a way, in her kind of insanity, and it’s given us so much fun stuff to play this season.”

One of the great joys of the last season was watching Alison develop an oddly touching friendship with Felix. The artist/hustler seemed to initially drawn to Alison’s large supply of prescription medication, while she came to rely on him as a friend who could provide unflinching honesty and a lack of judgement. Watching him provide backup as her “acting coach” at a house party while her husband was tied up in the basement was an excellent example of the show’s ability to steer through different genres, and we can look forward to plenty more mismatches in Season Two.

“The writers like to find these unusual pairings, I don’t think they were a predestined connection,” Maslany remembers. “I think they just kind of happened because something about them is so different and yet so similar, so I think it’s sort of an organic thing that happened because Jordan is so incredible, and the way he plays off of Alison is so fun and so different from his dynamic with Sarah. So I think we’ll see more of those odd couples. I just like to share scenes with actors who are in front of me, actually. That’s my favourite!”

Speaking of odd, it’s about time we discussed this season’s big bad. How do you follow a psychotic Ukrainian assassin with strange ideas about what love means? With something even scarier: white-collar villainy. The end of the last season introduced us to Rachel Duncan, a clone herself, only raised by the Neolutionists. She’s got an active interest in bringing Sarah in, and has got her eye on young Kira as the only known child of a clone. There was a twisted heartache behind Helena’s actions, but it looks like Rachel is all business.

“WHEN I READ THAT IN THE SCRIPT I WAS LIKE, ‘OH GOD, WHAT ARE WE DOING? THIS CAN’T HAPPEN!’”

TATIANA MASLANY



The further *Orphan Black* gets, the stranger things get and the more the stakes are raised.

"She's definitely scarier, Rachel," enthuses Maslany. "Because of that stillness, entitlement and quiet power. You don't know exactly what she's capable of, we don't know a lot about what she thinks or what she feels, and we start to peel that away this season and sort of see the real... whatever that person is underneath that icy façade. She's been so much fun to play because I don't think anybody would ever cast me as Rachel! Ever! Never! So I'm really lucky that I get to try her out and test her out a little bit."

THE IDEA THAT MASLANY WOULDN'T BE A CASTING AGENT'S FIRST THOUGHT SEEMS SLIGHTLY RIDICULOUS NOW. THIS ISN'T A SHOW ABOUT ASPECTS OF ONE PERSON;

they're not variations on a theme. Even though we were introduced to Sarah first, Maslany is playing several totally individual characters. "I think Sarah to me has always been the heartbeat of the show, but I don't feel any of the other characters are like extensions of her by any means," she says. "Her throughline is hers, and I think the writers have written the other characters so specifically

that I had never had to be, 'OK, I hope this person doesn't cross into that one,' because their voices are so different, so I feel like half the work is done there."

Still, half of that amount of work still adds up to a fair amount, so it's hardly surprising when Maslany tells us she's not pressing the writers to give away their secret twists and turns. "Yeah, I try not to think too far ahead," she laughs. "The writers and the creators have been really awesome about keeping me informed about things that might be coming up that I need to know about or that would help me to know about, but for me there is so much to think about on a day to day basis, and also my brain doesn't work well with plot, it just doesn't get it! So I'd rather be in the moment instead of thinking too much about the future, and I kind of have to be like that. Thankfully, most of the characters are in the dark, they're all kind of figuring things out as they go along, so it kind of works!"

Orphan Black is available on Blu-Ray.



Tatiana Maslany seamlessly tackles the task of playing multiple characters.

AND WE ARE ALL TOGETHER...

Which of our favourite sci-fi stars have taken on the most roles in the same sitting?

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



1 JULIE CHRISTIE (FAHRENHEIT 451)

François Truffaut understood that two Julie Christie performances are better than one, casting her as both the uncaring wife and the rebellious teacher in his film of Ray Bradbury's classic to show two sides of the same coin.

2 TIMOTHY HUTTON (THE DARK HALF)

George A Romero's mixed bag of a Stephen King adaptation stars Timothy Hutton as an author who decides to kill off his heartless pen name George Stark, only for Stark to stake a claim on life by murdering a lot of people.

3 WILLIAM SHATNER (STAR TREK)

A remarkable thespian whose versatility knows no bounds, Shatner took on several variations of Kirk in his time in the captain's

chair. With an evil duplicate, an android duplicate, a Mirror Universe version and a disguised Garth of Izar, he pushed the limits.

4 BEN BROWDER (FARSCAPE)

In the episode 'My Three Crichtons', our displaced hero manages to get himself split into three versions of himself: Future Crichton, regular Crichton and the Beast. But which Crichton is the most deserving of survival? Oh, and there's clone Crichton too.

5 MICHAEL KEATON (MULTIPLICITY)

What do you do when you don't have enough time in the day? Clone yourself! Keaton learns that the easy answer isn't the best one in Harold Ramis' intermittently funny comedy, as Macho, Sensitive and Stupid start ruining his life.

6 HALLE BERRY (CLOUD ATLAS)

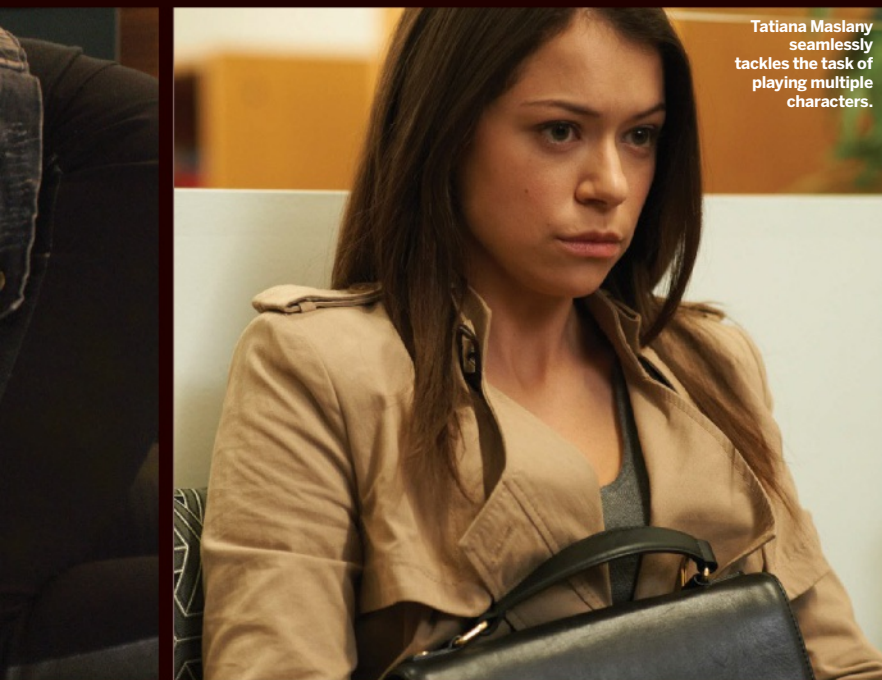
Along with Tom Hanks, Hugo Weaving, Jim Sturgess and Hugh Grant, Berry starred in each of the stories in the Wachowskis' and Tom Twyker's adaptation of David Mitchell's masterpiece.

7 TRICIA HELFER (BATTLESTAR GALACTICA)

Helfer's performance as the various versions of Number Six, the Cylon who appeared in both corporeal and imagined forms, managed to make each feel distinct, but still related.

8 SAM ROCKWELL (MOON)

Three years alone on the Moon is a long haul, but Sam Bell doesn't realise that there is no return to Earth; just another clone waiting to wake up. Can he and a fresh clone work together, or will they fall apart?



THRONE OF BLOOD

AFTER WHAT WAS QUITE POSSIBLY THE MOST DEVASTATING SEASON TO DATE, WHERE CAN *GAME OF THRONES* GO FROM HERE? WE TALK TO THE CAST ABOUT HOW NOBODY IS SAFE, AND WHY THEY LIKE IT THAT WAY...

LAST YEAR, WESTEROS WAS DROWNING IN BLOOD, AND WE LOOKED ON IN HORROR AS GEORGE RR MARTIN'S WORLD WAS TORN APART BY MORE DEATH THAN IT HAD EVER seen. It was as if the showrunners had taken a butcher's knife to the show, gutting the cast list and reminding us that no one is safe.

"It's a wonderful thing," Thomas Brodie-Sangster (Bran Stark's spiritual guide Jojen Reed) tells us. "I think it's healthy for the show to just chop their way through people's favourite characters. It's great, and it's not done enough in film and TV. I think it's brilliant."

Season Three was arguably as tough as *Game Of Thrones* has been on its characters and viewers. Figures who

had a comeuppance due, such as Theon Greyjoy (Alfie Allen), had their bad behaviour paid back with brutal savagery, in his case being tortured and castrated by the sadistic Ramsay Snow (Iwan Rheon). Characters were moved around like pieces on a chessboard, only to be dispatched when their masters felt it necessary, like poor Ros (Esmé Bianco), handed over to the sadistic King Joffrey (Jack Gleeson) for use as target practice by the scheming Littlefinger (Aiden Gillen). Most brutal of all was the Red Wedding, which decimated the Stark family and took Catelyn (Michelle Fairley), Robb (Richard Madden) and his pregnant wife Talisa (Oona Chaplin) away from us in horrific fashion.

You may wonder how *Game Of Thrones* could possibly maintain this level of shock and awe, but anyone who's read the books will tell you that there's plenty more to come. What is perhaps more impressive is that the cast seemed to be just as shell-shocked by the events of the season as the rest of us.

"I was like, 'No, it's not happening now, it's a dream! They'll just wake up and it's like 'Ah, it's a dream!'" Like in *Dallas*!" exclaims Sibel Kekilli, who plays Tyrion's faithful but strong-willed lover Shae. "I read it in the script and I thought 'No, they're not doing that to the people, because the fans love the family.'"

Not all of the cast are so easily taken aback, however. Wildlings are made ➤



THE WITCH AND THE PIRATE

Liam Cunningham and Carice van Houten talk Jack Russells and Lords of Light



"You don't have a favourite animal," interrupts Cunningham as van Houten tells a story about struggling with horse-riding. There's a brief pause before he adds, "Apart from Davos."

Their back and forth couldn't be more different from their combative relationship as Davos Seaworth, the good-hearted pirate who's short a few fingers, and Melisandre, the fire priestess who's more than prepared to drop leeches onto a naked young man. Speaking of leeches, van Houten says she was thrilled to commit such an outrageously grotesque act.

"I'm like, 'Oh yes!'" she grins. "I love that extreme stuff. That's why the show

is so great, the scenes are so thick and so well-written and meaty. A few were fake. There were some that looked like Dutch jelly worms." And as for the real ones? "They were pretty big. I didn't like to put them on his body."

As for Davos, he spent most of the last season in a prison cell awaiting execution, but Cunningham explains that there's no way Davos would leave Stannis. "I think of him as Jiminy Cricket, he's the conscience of Stannis," he tells us. "There's a purity to Davos, and even if Stannis is throwing him in jail he's got to sit there and go 'As soon as he comes round I'll show him the error of his ways.' But he wants to do it the right way, and he doesn't think this woman is honourable."

However, the Lord of Light has different plans. "There is a bit of a turn-up when it looks like I'm going to be killed, and a certain Red Woman saves his life," remembers Cunningham.

"We need him to fight the war that's to come," explains van Houten. "It's not that I like him, but I'm so happy as an actor that he's still alive. I love having him around."

"I'm like a small Jack Russell," adds Cunningham. "She'll be trying to put a lead on me in the next season."



ABOVE: ARYA STARK AND SANDOR CLEGANE
BELOW LEFT: TYWIN LANNISTER (CHARLES DANCE) WILL CONTINUE TO SCHEME FOR HIS FAMILY
BELOW RIGHT: DAENERYS TARGARYEN (EMILIA CLARKE) AND DAARIO NAHARIS (MICHEL HUISMAN)



“EVERYONE ALWAYS SAYS THE FIRST THING THEY DO IS FLICK THROUGH THE SCRIPTS TO CHECK THEY’RE NOT DEAD”

ISAAC HEMPSTEAD-WRIGHT

➤ of sterner stuff, as Natalia Tena (who plays Bran’s guardian Osha) explains. “I read the books, so I knew what was going to happen,” she grins. “I was quite excited, because I wanted to see how it was done. Oona’s one of my best mates, I was really sad that she was leaving. But I wanted her to be more pregnant, I think you could have done it more gruesome! That’s my take on it!”

Reading the books may be one thing, but as the series has progressed we’ve seen showrunners David Benioff and DB Weiss start to wander just a little from the source material. There hasn’t been anything too major, but with the series beginning to shuffle events from the novels around, it’s hardly surprising that the cast feel uneasy. Blood will have to be spilled to answer for the Red Wedding, the political furnace of King’s Landing is surely ready to explode, and the actors must be wondering who’s next on the chopping block.

“Everyone always says the first thing they do is flick through the scripts to check

they’re not dead,” laughs Isaac Hempstead-Wright, who plays the increasingly gifted Bran Stark. “But David and Dan often do jokes with the scripts, so for instance Alfie got sent a script where I jump out, stab him and kill him, and he sent me a text saying ‘You kill me!’ That was a joke.”

NIKOLAJ COSTER-WALDAU KNOWS SOMETHING ABOUT CHARACTERS TAKING A DRASTIC TURN. JAIME LANNISTER LOST A HAND IN SEASON THREE, BUT SEEMED TO

gain a soul in its place, as he realised he cared for his captor Brienne of Tarth (Gwendoline Christie) more than he thought. With his sword hand gone, however, Jaime faces the difficult task of fitting back into the Lannister clan in Season Four. You’d be forgiven for thinking that Jaime has been through enough, but nothing is ever certain.

“I might end up like one of those Monty Python characters!” he muses, briefly conjuring the image of *Holy Grail*’s Black Knight. However, he’s remarkably at ease

with the notion of Jaime potentially being sent to an early grave. “It’s great to be part of and I’m so grateful. It’s wonderful, but it’s a television show. It’s a job, it’s a fantastic job, and it’s going to end one day. I would love to be part of it to the end, I love working with these people, it’s just amazing... but it’s a television show.”

Even when George RR Martin came on set, Coster-Waldau refused to allow himself to ask about where Jaime might end up. “I think you stop yourself from asking the obvious question,” he smiles. “Which is, ‘Am I going to live to the end?’ It becomes very bland. That’s what you really want to know, so it’s just, ‘Did you watch the game?’” However, Kekilli tells us that she wasn’t quite so restrained. “I just said ‘Please don’t kill me,’” she reveals. “If you ever think that, don’t, and if you do, let me come back as a zombie.” And he said ‘Yes Sibel, of course.’”

It’s possible that Coster-Waldau’s laid-back attitude simply comes from the fact that there’s no way of knowing where ➤



ABOVE: TYRION LANNISTER (PETER DINKLAGE) AND SHAE (SIBEL KEKILLI) BELOW LEFT: SAMWELL TARLY (JOHN BRADLEY) WILL BE FIGHTING TO HOLD THE WALL RIGHT: JON SNOW (KIT HARRINGTON) WILL BE JOINING HIM



➤ the path for many of these characters leads. With the penultimate novel *The Winds Of Winter* at least a year away, the fates of so many of our favourites remain a mystery. "Certainly it's one of the interesting things about the show, the fact that we're not sure," opines Liam Cunningham, whose honourable pirate Davos Seaworth has now cheated death more than once. "We know a little a bit about our history, but we don't know what our motivations are. And because they're wavering away from the novels, in a sense it discloses itself to us as it does the audience. There is a real organic nature to it which is really cool."

"I think I have a great part, and it's still evolving," agrees Carice van Houten. The Dutch actress plays red priestess Melisandre, who surprised many of us when she told Stannis Baratheon (Stephen Dillane) not to execute Davos for releasing potential sacrifice victim Gendry (Joe Dempsie). "It's still in development and it's a mystery. No one is black and white, that's why none of the characters are boring and none of the storylines are boring. I love it that the female parts in the show are so strong. It's not that they're the wives sitting at home

in the castles with the babies; they're very cool, strong characters. I don't have red eyes [like her character in the novels] because otherwise she becomes like a Roger Rabbit... [Jessica Rabbit," Cunningham corrects] and it's got to make her a little bit more human, I think."

THE INTRODUCTION OF JESSICA RABBIT INTO THE DISCUSSION IS FITTING, AS THE DEBATE ABOUT GAME OF THRONES' TREATMENT OF WOMEN RAGED ON INTO ITS THIRD SEASON

and promises to continue. However, the cast believe very firmly that the series is not guilty of the accusations levelled against it. Van Houten has done her fair share of disrobing as Melisandre, and tells us that the nudity is serving a purpose. "Of course, it has to be functional, and it mostly is, and if it's not then you discuss and you find a way," she explains. "But in general I want to say that's what I like about the show, not the sex per se, but nudity is part of life. We can see machine guns, but we cannot see a fucking nipple? I don't get it. I really have to make a point here. Who sleeps with their bra on? It's annoying! Sorry, maybe that's a Dutch approach, but I think we have to

get used to it a little bit, it's part of life, man. Bodies."

"If there were not hugely strong female characters in this like yourself..." begins Cunningham, "...it would be sexist," concludes Van Houten.

"To have that kind of stuff it has to be earned, otherwise it's just gratuitous," he continues. "But some of the most dangerous characters in this show are women. They're extraordinarily well-rounded and well-drawn. I think there's a level of intelligence required by the viewer or whoever is watching this, and it doesn't patronise, and it shows the dark side and the bright side of humanity. It's inclusive, it's not just the strong man and the woman as this stay-at-home, or she's there to be a hostage. [Melisandre] is not functional; she's fucking dangerous in this show and has to be watched, as in real life! And I think that's the reason. If the violence and the sex wasn't in the show then that would be patronising, I think."

The number of dangerous people in *Game Of Thrones* goes some way to accounting for the outrageously high body count. If the end of Season Three ➤

SMOKE AND MIRRORS

How the Shadow Baby was born

Any conversation with Liam Cunningham and Carice van Houten about the strangest things they've done on *Game Of Thrones* will inevitably turn to the second season episode 'Garden Of Bones'. "Well," begins Van Houten, "I gave birth to a shadow baby."

"Yeah, that was weird, man," Cunningham remembers. "'I tried to explain it to someone who had never seen the show. I could see his head turn, and he said 'What the hell are you talking about?'"

As shocking as the scene is to watch, Van Houten tells us that shooting it wasn't exactly the most pleasurable experience. "You're in a real cave and it's real cold."

"Because Carice had a prosthetic belly on, it was freezing cold, there were guys behind her pressing things to make her belly turn, she was virtually naked, it was the middle of the night, and this cave we were in was open at both ends, so there was a breeze going through that would cut you in two," adds Cunningham. "I had about ten layers on and I was chilly, and she was giving birth to the thing that wasn't there. The level of concentration needed to make this believable is a real credit to her, and she hardly complained at all!"

GAME OF DEATH

The Tarot Card Guide to Game Of Thrones

THE CARDS
01 THE PRESENT
02 THE PAST
03 THE FUTURE
04 THE OBSTACLE
05 THE GOAL

ARYA

TYRION

01

THE TOWER

Arya thought that she had finally found her family, only to have her hope snatched away from her. The Red Wedding has left her more determined to take bloody vengeance than ever.

02

THE HERMIT

Always seeing herself as an outsider, Arya had more in common with Jon Snow than any of her other siblings. Her instincts are to go it alone, but she will need help if she is to survive.

03

DEATH

The third season finale saw Arya kill a Frey soldier in cold blood and say the words 'Valar Morghulis'. The lessons taught by Jaqen H'ghar will not have been wasted; she has her kill list.

04

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

Due to her status as a Stark and her age, she's been hurled to and from different groups. She must take control of her destiny if she is going to get what she wants.

05

JUSTICE

Somebody needs to make the Lannisters pay for what they have done. So much Stark blood has been spilled; it's about time that the scales were balanced. Could Arya be the one to do this?

01

THE MAGICIAN

Resourceful to the last, Tyrion has managed to keep himself, Shae and Sansa alive through some trying times. Now that he's in charge of the kingdom's finances, more wizardry will be required.

02

THE DEVIL

The reason Tyrion has had to work so hard to keep himself and his loved ones safe is King Joffrey, whose growing psychosis and personal dislike for Tyrion makes him more and more dangerous.

03

THE MOON

Tyrion's future in King's Landing is unclear. He's done as his father asked by marrying Sansa, but no one is safe. With so much uncertainty, there's plenty of worry and doubt.

04

DEATH

The reason for Tyrion's constant concern isn't just the horror of his nephew. He's tied to his monstrous family, even though he's aware of how heinous their actions are.

05

STRENGTH

There's great strength inside Tyrion, as he demonstrated when he refused to bed Sansa in front of the entire court on his wedding night. His growing sense of moral duty could be his salvation.



LEFT: OBERYN MARTELL (PEDRO PASCAL) AND HIS PARAMOUR ELLARIA SAND (INDIRA VARMA) ABOVE RIGHT: THE NOTORIOUS KING JOFFREY BELOW LEFT: YGRITTE (ROSE LESLIE) AND FELLOW WILDLING TORMUND (KRISTOFER HINJOU)



"I WANTED TALISA TO BE MORE PREGNANT, I THINK YOU COULD HAVE DONE IT MORE GRUESOME!"

NATALIE TENA



DAENERYS

JON

01

THE WORLD
Daenerys' conquest shows no sign of slowing down. After gaining the allegiance of the Second Sons and claiming the city of Yunkai, she appears to be unstoppable.

02

STRENGTH
Since her marriage to Khal Drogo, Daenerys has been unflinching in her determination to claim the Iron Throne. With each victory her power and her armies grow.

03

THE CHARIOT
With the Unsullied behind her and Daario Naharis being added to her Queensguard, Daenerys' campaign looks set to continue. However, we all know what pride comes before.

04

THE LOVERS
Daario's commitment to Daenerys comes in large part due to him seeing her in a romantic light. With a growing number of men devoted to her, will it be long before the Queen takes a lover?

05

TEMPERANCE
Daenerys has never been shy of making her enemies feel her wrath, but she's rarely acted rashly either. She balances the advice of her companions with her own sense of right and wrong.

01

THE HERMIT
Jon's journey has been about self-discovery as much as anything else. He had to make tough choices about loyalty, love and loss, and his commitment to the Night's Watch is clear.

02

THE LOVERS
Jon fell hard for Wildling Ygritte, but their love was not to be. Despite their obviously strong feelings for each other, he couldn't bring himself to kill an innocent man and she shot him full of arrows.

03

THE MAGICIAN
Although Jon has been put through a lot, he has managed to return to the Night's Watch with his life. He will surely be an invaluable asset due to his determination and focus.

04

THE HANGED MAN
Sacrifice is something that Jon knows a lot about. He gave up his freedom to take the black, killed Qhorin Halfhand and gave up his love for Ygritte. It all needs to be for something.

05

THE EMPEROR
If Jon fulfils his potential then he could prove to be a strong leader. He's got his half-brother Robb's morals, and has proved himself in combat. The Night's Watch is lucky to have him.

➤ is anything to go by, it's that the worst kind of dangerous people are winning. Hempstead-Wright's Bran is the last of a dying breed, one of the few unambiguously good people in Westeros. With his (fictional) parents and big brother murdered, you might have thought that the young actor would be slightly resentful of the villains' continued success.

"I quite like it," he counters. "I think shows where the good guys always win are a little bit tedious; without some sort of opposite force nothing really happens. We all love to hate a bad guy. You just have to look at Joffrey and you loathe him! *Game Of Thrones* would be nothing without its bad guys."

"You need to feel a bit uncomfortable," agrees Brodie-Sangster. "You can't think that everything will be OK, because it often isn't. What makes it exciting to read and watch is that you don't know what's going to happen to your favourite characters, they could have their heads chopped off or the bad guy

might prevail. That's brilliant, because you don't know what's going to happen. You can't predict it."

Bran and Jojen's storyline has been moved forward relatively slowly over the course of the third season, as the young Stark took the advice of his mentor to develop his magical powers. Although Bran used his abilities to control Hodor (Kristian Nairn) in the season finale, Hempstead-Wright tells us that there's no reason to believe Bran's optimistic outlook will falter.

"I think because Bran is so totally reliant on other people – Hodor or Osha or Jojen – he's had to trust people, and he can't afford to be the Arya type: 'I don't trust anyone, I'm going to kill everyone,'" he explains. "But I think he has grown up in a sense where he's sensed that he can't really be absolutely trusting, because half his family have been slaughtered through being too trusting. And definitely in seasons to come he'll start to take on a bit more responsibility for his own self."

"IF THE VIOLENCE AND THE SEX WASN'T IN THE SHOW THAT WOULD BE PATRONISING"



LIAM CUNNINGHAM

SPEAKING OF ARYA, WE LAST SAW HER MURDER A FREY SOLDIER AND WHISPER "VALAR MORGHULIS" AS THE HOUND (RORY MCCANN) LOOKED ON. THE VENGEFUL

young girl and the irascible warrior were at each other's throats all season, but actress Maisie Williams tells us that Season Four will see their relationship develop into something less violent – at least, the violence won't be directed at each other.

"I think they don't want to kill each other anymore," she tells us. "They're not friends either, but they've come to this uneasy truce where they're not deliberately trying to make it unpleasant for each other, and they're just trying to get along. I think it is a really interesting relationship, and we do see it change a little bit after [Season Three] Episode Nine. We see the Hound accepting Arya a little bit and Arya realising that actually he is a pretty good person to be with in this world. He's doing something right, as hundreds of people are terrified of him. As much as she's loyal to the stuff she learned from Syrio Forel and that right way of killing people, I think she's realising that at the end of the day, you need to get the job done, and that's what he's very good at. The development of Arya and the Hound's relationship is really exciting this year."



LEFT: MARGAERY TYRELL (NATALIE DORMER) WITH GRANDMOTHER OLENN (DIANA RIGG) BELOW LEFT: DAENERYS CONTEMPLATES RULE RIGHT: TOUGH TIMES ARE AHEAD FOR BOTH SANSA STARK (SOPHIE TURNER) AND TYRION



GIVE THE MAN A HAND

Nikolaj Coster-Waldau remembers bear pits and beatings

It's fair to say that the turning point for Jaime Lannister in Season Three was the moment he decided to risk his life for Brienne by jumping in to help her fight a bear. "The bear was called Bart the Bear the Second," Nikolaj Coster-Waldau grins. "We were shooting this outside Los Angeles, and he would arrive on set in his trailer. Well, it was a cage on wheels really, and the whole crew had to be ready outside, and for him to come out of his cage everybody had to cheer."

As country and western music played, the full-grown performing bear would amble out and take his position. "Bart would come out and sniff the air, and they would bring in whipped cream. He was big. They aren't scary, are they; they seem so cosy."

Although Bart may have looked friendly, Coster-Waldau was made aware of the precautions that had been taken in case the bear turned nasty. "The safety thing was this little piece of wire, and it was attached to something like a car battery," he laughs.

As scary as the experience was, Coster-Waldau tells us that it was more fun than shooting the loss of his hand. "That night we shot that scene I got sick, so it was perfect," he reveals. "They built this huge knife and they built a version so [Noah Taylor] could whack it down. Of course, he would have to be very accurate, and he wasn't always accurate. It was good for the reaction. He went for it, but it's good."

It wasn't the only time that Taylor missed his mark. "There was another day where I fall off the horse and he beats me. It was so muddy, there was so much mud everywhere, and he had to kick me in the stomach, which isn't dangerous at all, but you have to be a little specific about where you hit. Because it was so muddy and we were rolling around, he missed and hit my rib, which took me about a month to get over. That's why they cut to [Gwendoline Christie] laughing. They had to reshoot that three times, 'Gwen, Brienne shouldn't be laughing.'"



Arya and the Hound aren't the only ones with a developing partnership. Somewhere during the course of their journey together, Jaime realised that he had come to depend on Brienne and, more than that, felt protective of her, so much so that he jumped into a bear pit to defend her. However, with Jaime back with his family, will this change of heart stick, or will we see him go back to pushing small children out of windows?

"It's all about points of view," he laughs. "He still wants to sleep with his sister! When you see him first, if you were told before the scene in episode one where he's having sex with Cersei and he pushes Bran out of the window, if you had the information before that, yes it's his sister, but it's true love, it's the love of his life and they desperately want to be together. It's horrible, but it's romantic love, and if you were then told that there's a horrible little evil boy climbing the walls, if that little horrible boy tells anyone what he saw they would have to kill Cersei's lovely children, and she would die, the love of his life would die, and he would probably die as well. If you were told that, maybe you would think differently. He does something because he's all about loyalty and family, and he wants to protect the people he loves. And that goes through, I think, to Brienne."

"The big question, of course, is what happens when he gets back to King's Landing. That's where you're going to find out how it's actually changed him," Coster-Waldau teases. "The Lannister family is

together for the first time really on the show, and that was really interesting to explore. I think at the end of Season Three something has changed, but he doesn't know what that is and he surprises himself. He doesn't understand, I think, really why he goes back and rescues her from that bear, and that surprises him, because she's such a pain. I think the fact is that he sees himself in that woman, he sees what he used to be when he was younger, the honesty and the loyalty and the trustworthiness."

The reluctance to give out any specific details is understandable, especially given how powerful the surprise of the Red Wedding was. What everyone seems keen to tell us is that unlike previous seasons, Season Four won't make us wait until the penultimate episode to take our breath away.

"It's a very dramatic season," Coster-Waldau tells us. "Where before you had one or two episodes that kind of peaked, I think there are a lot more peaks here. It's like one of the hardest stages of the Tour de France."

"It's going to be kicking off early," enthuses Cunningham. "It's really dramatic, and as opposed to the one climax of other seasons, there'll be several. It's bigger, bolder and brassier, and I'm dying to see it, because it's going to be different this season."

Game of Thrones Season Four is available on Blu-Ray February 2015.



GAME OF THRONES COAT OF MANY ARMS

Pod's been given the task of carrying the houses' shields to the throne room for the wedding. However, clumsy Pod has gone and dropped them all, and he doesn't know which shield goes with which house! Can you help him sort this mess out before Tywin comes back from the loo?



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8

OH, POD!

ANSWERS:
1. HOUSE ARRYN 2. HOUSE BARATHEON 3. HOUSE GREYJOY 4. HOUSE LANNISTER
5. HOUSE STARK 6. HOUSE TARGARYEN 7. HOUSE TULLY 8. HOUSE TYRELL



THE WALKING DEAD ANNALEIGH PARKER'S BIG DAY

ANNALEIGH PARKER WOKE UP FEELING SCARED. SHE'D WOKEN UP FEELING SCARED WHAT SEEMED TO BE AS LONG AS SHE COULD REMEMBER. SHE OPENED HER EYES AND COUNTED IT AS FOUR DAYS SINCE DAD AND JEFF HAD GONE, TWO DAYS LONGER THAN THEY'D SAID SHE SHOULD WAIT FOR THEM. IT WAS TIME TO MOVE.

Her bag of provisions was in the kitchen, her gun was by the bed. She hadn't slept without one since it all started. She took a quick look around to make sure that she wasn't missing anything, and said goodbye.

As she walked she went over the plan, the one that they'd insisted on telling her a thousand times. She'd turned fifteen in the fall but that hadn't stopped them all treating her like a baby. It only got worse once Mom had been bit. Jeff and Dad had done their best to keep a protective circle around her, but supplies had run out anyway. So now she had to walk south, moving quietly, moving quickly.

The group hadn't always been so small. There had been others, friends and strangers. At first it seemed like grouping together made sense. Safety in numbers. But Annaleigh had started to see the change in their faces after the first few months, after the hunger had set in and it was clear that this was the world they lived in now. One by one, people began to leave, muttering about striking out on their own, or following up on rumours of survivors' camps. Places where it was safe. Places where you could begin again.

Daddy had always said that to listen to such talk was foolishness. People believed what they wanted to believe; who was to say that other groups weren't talking about their group in the same way? All things pass, he said, and that was certainly true of their food. So five days ago he and Jeff had headed to Woodbury, telling Annaleigh that, if they didn't come back, to get as far as she could in the opposite direction. They had told her

to wait at the gas station near the prison for a day and, if they didn't come after that, to just keep going and never look back.

Annaleigh couldn't think in those final terms. She couldn't let herself think about words like 'never.' All she could do was focus on the immediate problems. She had enough food for a week. She had enough water for a couple of days. The shoes Jeff had found her fit well enough, and she had enough ammunition for...well, she didn't want to think too much about that either. If she kept quiet and kept moving, like Daddy said, everything would be fine. Her brother and her daddy would be there waiting for her, and if they weren't, she'd wait.

The gas station was far enough to make her walk long and lonely, but as the sun started to set she saw the familiar sign looming up, advertising gas and food that would have been worth a lot more than the price advertised, had they been there. Caution that had been drilled into her made her slip her gun from its holster, and she moved silently across the tarmac to the front door.

The place seemed deserted. It was obvious from the mess that someone had been there and taken what there was to take, but Annaleigh didn't think that they'd stuck around. There was nobody here to make trouble. She took a quick tour of the place, checking the corners, looking behind the doors, and settled down to wait.

As night fell she made herself comfortable by the door. She would wait. That was all there was to it. Daddy and Jeff would be here soon. They'd be here and they'd tell her that they'd found something. They'd found food. Shelter. Friends. Family. She let herself think this way for so long that when the door opened, and her daddy and brother came through it, she was too pleased to notice how they'd changed.

GORE AND ORDER

BEFORE THE HUNGER PAINS BECAME TOO MUCH, SCIFINOW FLEW TO THE SET OF THE WALKING DEAD TO SEE WHAT – OR WHO – IS ON THE MENU IN SEASON FIVE OF TV'S GRISTLIEST SHOW...

IT'S NOT JUST THE ZOMBIES THAT WANT TO DEVOUR YOU ON THE SET OF THE WALKING DEAD. THE DECAYING CADAVERS ARE COMPETING WITH THE HORDES OF RAVENOUS ticks that plague Atlanta, Georgia – home of the hit post-apocalyptic TV show. Now in its fifth season, the cast and crew are fully armed against these bloodsucking paratroopers that will latch onto any inch of exposed flesh. Each night, everyone from the make-up artist to principal cast will have to strip off in front of the mirror to check their entire bodies for ticks. On top of that, there are long hours and extreme humidity to contend with, but you won't catch anyone complaining, least of all the main star Andrew Lincoln.

"We're blessed in this show, because we get to act in this," he says, gesturing to the beautiful forest that surrounds us. "We get eaten by bugs and ticks. It's the real deal, but they're more environments than sets. It's about trying to make it as real as possible. The greatest tonal note I ever got was from [show creator] Frank Darabont. He was talking about the second episode, and said that when Rick jumps off the tank,

the first thing that happens is he twists his ankle. That's the show we're in."

Part of this mission of authenticity led to Lincoln tearing into a lump of raw chicken. It was while filming one of the show's most controversial scenes to date, where Rick resorts to mauling a man's throat in order to save not only his life, but that of his son Carl (Chandler Riggs) and friends. The incident was borrowed from Robert Kirkman's long-running comics that the show is based on, but Lincoln was afraid that they had finally gone too far. "I called up [showrunner] Scott Gimple and said, 'We've always been very responsible with

violence in our show, but there's a line in the sand, do you think we may be overstepping it?' He didn't think so, and when it played out he was proven right; it made complete sense," he says. "There had been so much wrestling with morality since the death of Shane [Jon Bernthal]. I think this was a key moment where he made peace with that. It was a necessary thing in order to save his son's life and everybody else's

lives, and that's who he is. Rick's in a place where he is more competent and more dangerous than he's ever been."

This will to survive is what left us with a sense of hope at the end of Season Four, despite Rick and his group being stripped of their weapons and imprisoned inside a railroad car by the Terminus crew. We can only assume that they make a sharp exit, or else the first episode will be very dark indeed. "Yeah, it's just a voiceover!" jokes

Lincoln. "It's the most ambitious we've attempted, and because it's not a reboot episode – we don't have to explain where we are – it begins where you left

off." But Rick's not the only alpha male inside that confined space; there's also the handlebar-moustachioed Abraham (Michael Cudlitz), who's determined to take Eugene (Josh McDermitt) to Washington and end the pandemic. Can Rick lead this ever-expanding troupe? "Hells to the yeah!" cries Lincoln. "It will be nice to be back with the gun, the boots and the swagger."

Watching his back is the ever-loyal Daryl Dixon, or "the archer," as Terminus leader Gareth (Andrew J West) called him in the Season Four finale. Actor Norman Reedus didn't mind much: "I guess he could have said 'smelly redneck,' so it's better than that!" he quips between takes. "I think it says a lot about Gareth's character to give us titles and put us into categories." It's

"I SAID 'THERE'S A LINE IN THE SAND, DO YOU THINK WE MAY BE OVERSTEPPING IT?'"
ANDREW LINCOLN

(Clockwise from bottom left): The main baddies may be humans, but don't expect any let up in the zombie action; Will Glenn step up to the plate this season; Michonne's sisterly/motherly relationship with Carl has provoked much debate.



unclear what kind of community Gareth is in charge of, but speculation suggests that they are cannibals, luring in fresh meat with the promise of 'sanctuary for all'. He appears to be the latest in a long line of human threats that are outnumbering the walkers. That's not to say we didn't see one on the set, though.

While strolling into the cafeteria, we quickly realise that we've been beaten to it by a hungry walker. He's sat by himself, head hung low under a ton of prosthetics. His neck has been ripped

“IT'S LIKE REAL LIFE; YOU DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH TIME YOU HAVE WITH PEOPLE”
NORMAN REEDUS

to ribbons and his lips torn clean off, which makes chewing a bit of a chore. Unlike the messy eaters on the show, he's painstakingly prising his new mouth apart in order to insert a morsel of food and avoid destroying four hours' worth of make-up. He looks so lonely that we want to befriend him, but make-up effects supervisor Greg Nicotero has a blanket rule that no one talks to the walkers on set. It's all part of 'keeping it real' when the cameras start to roll.

The last time Daryl came up against an undead mob, it cost him a friend. Beth (Emily Kinney) was bundled into a car by an unknown assailant, and now he's left to ponder her fate. "She's probably at some Urban Outfitters," laughs Reedus. "I think he fears the



(Clockwise from left) Beth and Daryl grew closer last season before being cruelly torn apart; Maggie has emerged as one of the show's strongest characters; and Abraham shares many similarities with his comic-book counterpart.



THE SAMURAI

Danai Gurira on strong women and an even stronger season

What was Michonne thinking when she saw her zombie lookalike?

I think it was a wake-up call to live. She was going back to the old Michonne, walking through fields with pets and no people. She was regressing after the loss of the prison, and it was a do-or-die situation – do I become that chick I was before and not give a shit if I live or die, or do I choose to live? That doppelganger zombie definitely awoke her to realise that actually that is not me, that will never be me, and I will not go the same way as this woman went.

Michonne's quite motherly towards Carl. Do you feel like that in real life?

Some people say motherly, others say big sisterly – there are all sorts of interpretations of that relationship. I love Chandler [Riggs], and definitely when people start to say stuff on set I'm like 'Woah woah woah, Chandler cannot hear that!' He doesn't cuss, he's just a really good kid, but he hears us say all types of things, so I do sometimes try to shield him from things, but he's like, 'Why are you bothering?' I feel a great connection to him, he's a very impressive young man.

Have you formed a special relationship with the katana, the way that Michonne has?

Absolutely. I, Danai, feel very deep loss not being able to pick up my weapon every day. The beauty of Michonne is that she's powerful beyond a weapon, and she can figure out another one. We know that she had to give it up at the end of last season, and the question is, who is she beyond that weapon? The weapon only worked because it was in her hands, so it's very interesting to navigate her without that. It doesn't take away anything from the fact that she's just never going to go down easy.



THE HUSBAND

Steven Yeun faces up to Glenn's uncertain future

You have a degree in psychology, so who do you think is mentally the strongest character?

I would say someone that's remained consistent has been Daryl; you pick pieces off and learn more about him. In terms of Glenn, I think his moral compass is still sound, but the first deviation from normal Glenn came as soon as he found love. As a young man, finding something to fight for, you don't necessarily take it in your stride the best way; you overshoot or pose in a way you think you're supposed to handle it, but realising that the grace of it is sometimes knowing you have to pull back.

Does knowing what happens to Glenn in the comics affect your performance?

It's such a surprise in the comic that you can't really lead up to it or play it in a certain way. You just have to stay true and make sure you keep this character focused and build him up so that if it happens, it would mean something.

If you had a bucket-list of things Glenn could do, what would be on there?

Ride a motorcycle. I would love to see Glenn take the lead. We've seen bits and pieces so far, but nothing was truer than the first season. I thought that was the first time he really took the lead, and since then he's filled in the gap when the other alpha is missing, but I don't think we've seen him take charge of an entire group – and maybe kill someone with a sword and do what everybody else is doing [laughs].

Are you glad not to be wearing the riot gear anymore?

God yes. It was so hot in that thing. It's also another shedding for Glenn – you shed the old, oversized baggy clothes he used to wear, and now the riot gear, and you see him evolve over time. Maybe he's like a butterfly? No, that's lame.



(Above middle) Carol will have to deal with the fallout of her actions in Season Five.

worst. To stay alive in the world this long you have to be in a large number of people or you have to be a bad person, so the odds are that something bad has happened to her."

The pair became close after being thrown together in the mid-season finale that saw the prison torn apart by the Governor (David Morrissey) and his men. Even after watching her father Hershel (Scott Wilson) beheaded, she kept hope alive and managed to convince a downward-spiralling Daryl to do the same. Fans figured that romance was on the cards, but not if Norman Reedus has anything to do with it: "I've been fighting having any relationship since day one, because once you have

it, it's done. He's not the kind of guy who would throw someone up against a tree in the moonlight. I don't want him to be so suave, so if it happens, I want to make it a thing. I don't want to just do it."

But while the internet goes to war over who that lucky lady might be, we suspect that the ones to watch are Rick and Daryl. "What are you hinting at?" Reedus looks suspicious, as we hastily try to backtrack. It turns out we needn't have bothered. "That storyline was actually talked about at one point, very early on. Not with those two characters, but that Daryl may have a tendency to look in this direction and not that direction, and if you call him out on it he'll probably stab you, so he doesn't ➤



➤ really understand what's going on. Frank [Darabont] brought that up to me at a party, and I was like 'Go for it, let's do it! I'm all for twisting people's brains.'

Having been created for the TV show, the writers take their inspiration for Daryl from what they see on screen. "Like when Andrea [Laurie Holden] shoots Daryl and Carol [Melissa McBride] leans down to kiss me on the forehead, I flinch like, 'Don't hurt me,' and then it was written in that I was an abused kid. You get opportunities to do things that maybe you wouldn't if you were in the comic-book."

This rich development has made Daryl the fan favourite, which was clear to see when we looked round the Woodbury Shoppe earlier that day. The merchandise-flogging store is located in Senoia, Georgia – where the fictional town of Woodbury was set – and it's packed with clothing emblazoned with slogans like 'Mrs Reedus' and 'If Daryl dies, we riot'. It must give a certain

amount of job security in a show that's merciless with its cast. "Can we knock on wood together? Don't even go there!" he says, pounding the table, not taking any chances. "It's like real life; you don't know how much time you have with people. You always think you have more."

But unlike in life, there is always a reason for demise in the world of *The Walking Dead*. Producer Gale Anne Hurd says it's paramount that nothing is done gratuitously: "That's what keeps Scott Gimple and his writers up at night. We don't want to do anything for shock value. People sometimes complain that the show can be a little slow, but we have figured out all the little clues to follow, like with Carol and her journey," she explains. "Many viewers were convinced she couldn't have killed Karen and David, that it must have been the little girls, but that's part of building where we want to get to for the mid-season finale and for the finale. It's not arbitrary."

More than ever, in Season Five it's a case of no one being safe.

Incidentally, when we see Melissa McBride, she's every bit as protective as she is on the telly. "Here, have my bug spray!" she kindly offers, clocking our attempts to fend off a swarm of mosquitoes with our bare hands. We can't reveal who she was sharing a scene with mere moments before, but we can't wait to see how it unfolds.

"A lot of our cast has reunited, so we can see how that dynamic has changed," says Hurd. "They've all had experiences from which they have grown, they've all been traumatised to some extent, and now they are in the worst predicament they have been in, because they're locked in a box car." Seeing the survivors corralled into the cart was traumatic for other reasons, too. Anyone who drew parallels to World War II concentration camps was thinking along the right lines: "Being of Jewish ancestry, I don't think you can ever trivialise something like that, but one of the things Greg Nicotero did was make everyone watch documentaries the BBC did about Auschwitz."

"There is very much a connection to the theme we continue to explore

A LOT OF OUR CAST HAS REUNITED, SO WE CAN SEE HOW THAT DYNAMIC HAS CHANGED GALE ANNE HURD

THE SOLDIER

Abraham star Michael Cudlitz talks facial hair, spoilers and fate

It seems that Abraham will have to defend his belief in Eugene, because Rick's naturally suspicious of people. And that mullet is very suspect... Science in the front, party at the back!

There seems to be some very questionable fashion sense on *The Walking Dead*, with your crazy facial hair as well. Are you comfortable with that?

Everyone has their look for a specific reason. I think Robert Kirkman is pretty awesome, the way he's structured the world. We project ourselves in a certain way depending on how we want to be perceived, and I think those things haven't changed, even though our ability and assets are limited, but everyone in this world has chosen their style to project a certain persona. Abraham is very aware of how he looks and dresses, and there's intimidation factored into that choice. People aren't going to mess with him.

Is it difficult to keep spoilers a secret?

I've never talked so much about something and not really said anything in my life! We're in a unique situation where within three days the whole world sees the show. I just have to be careful not to say that I kill Daryl in Episode Four, which I would never do [laughs].

Do you look to the comics for his fate?

I asked Scott how my story was going to mirror the comics for back story, and he said no, absolutely read up on it. The back story from an emotional standpoint will be accurate in the sense that he will be coming from the same emotional turmoil – not necessarily the same events – but there will be that wonderfully layered tragedy in his past. But moving forward, all bets are off to the future of the specific characters. You have a world now where Abraham, Tyreese and Daryl all live together, and in the comics Tyreese is dead and Daryl doesn't exist.



of who will you become? That applies not only to our primary cast members, but to the people they encounter. Once you've been pushed to a point that you find yourself capable of doing things you never thought you would be capable of, can you maintain your humanity? What are you willing to do to survive, and is there anything you won't do?"

In the Season Five trailer, it looks like the Terminus gang will resort to extreme measures. There's even speculation that this isn't even Gareth's doing, and is in fact down to comic-book villain Negan. Hurd says it's a question of when he'll appear, not if: "Robert Kirkman's always said at some point he will appear. As to when – well, that wouldn't be any fun if we told you," she teases. "But he is such an important character that we have to bring him to life at some point. Every season there will be characters from the comic-book, but not necessarily in the chronological order they appear."

"We expanded the period of time Shane was on the show because [actor] Jon [Bernthal] was so fantastic, and the love triangle was so compelling that we wanted to give it a longer arc. And then

there are times when even when we have great actors, like Sophia [Madison Lintz], that was a very important lesson in Carol's character growth. It's very difficult for all of us to say goodbye to someone. It's like going to war when you're in these gruelling circumstances, and you don't want to lose anybody."

It seems that tick checks and perspiration breed solidarity. "No one has changed from the first season to the fifth season. No one thinks they're too good for the little zombie show," she continues. "It could be very different; there could have been people that wished they had never signed, which you get with a lot of shows, and you see it in their performances, so we're blessed. We have the best fans in the world, we love and respect them, and we know that we do it for them. We're not here just to get awards; we're here to make sure that the fans – who are counting the days until we're on the air again – feel that the wait was worthwhile." 

The Walking Dead Season Four is available on Blu-Ray.



(Clockwise from left): Rick's leadership skills will be put to the ultimate test; Norman Reedus gambles with his life with co-executive producer and make-up maestro Greg Nicotero; and Beth's fate has been left up in the air.



13

REASONS WHY
YOU NEED TO BE
WATCHING...

SLEEPY

HOW AN UNLIKELY UPDATE BECAME THE BEST NEW SUPERNATURAL SHOW ON TELEVISION...

IT WAS EASY TO BE SCEPTICAL ABOUT SLEEPY HOLLOW: 18TH CENTURY REDCOAT-TURNED-REVOLUTIONARY ICHABOD CRANE AWAKES IN THE MODERN DAY, TEAMING UP WITH THE LOCAL POLICE TO STOP THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN FROM BRINGING ABOUT THE END OF THE WORLD? NOW, THOSE voices sound pretty lonely, the rest of us have jumped on board with Sleepy Hollow's mix of scares, laughs and full-on madness, enjoying the most entertaining supernatural show on the air. We've fallen in love with Ichabod (Tom Mison) and his partner Abbie (Nicole Beharie). We want to see more of the Masonic plan to stop the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. We want Ichabod to find a way to rescue his wife Katrina (Katia Winter), a witch stranded in purgatory, and we want to see more of him struggling to grasp 21st Century technology.

SciFiNow talks to Winter about why you should make *Sleepy Hollow* a regular destination, and where Season Two will take us. ➤

HOLLOW

REARRANGED PARTNERSHIPS

How would TV's heroes work with someone else getting their back?



DEAN WINCHESTER & OLIVIA DUNHAM

Deprived of his brother, Dean Winchester became even more sullen and withdrawn than usual, sitting in his Impala alone, eating cheeseburgers and listening to classic rock. Used to navigating the moods of difficult men, Olivia surprises her new partner by tackling the paranormal without plunging into depression every five minutes and being a woman in his life who lasts more than an episode. Since he's been confronted with somebody who doesn't consistently let their emotions get in the way of logic, Dean has grown as a person and investigator. He hasn't had to go to Hell or Purgatory in months.



DANA SCULLY & ABBIE MILLS

Lieutenant Mills told her superiors that she was delighted that she would be getting assistance from the FBI as Moloch's evil plan continues to move forward. However, after sharing a similar matter of fact worldview, Agent Scully quickly alienated her new partner after refusing to believe that the creature they had just chased through a fairground was a living golem, telling Mills that there had to be a reasonable explanation for why Andy Brooks' neck looks like that. She also failed to corroborate Mills' story of a headless horseman, as she had been temporarily knocked unconscious.



DALE COOPER & KIERA CAMERON

Agent Cooper reported being delighted to meet Agent Kiera Cameron and, after a visit to the woods to throw some rocks at glass bottles, he came back with a wild claim about his new partner hailing from a futuristic Vancouver. Cameron was understandably reluctant to confirm this, but on her psych evaluation she claims to have learned from his relaxation techniques and that his Tibetan detective skills have been invaluable in helping to put a stop to Liber8. We have advised Cooper not to mention the Red Room, as we are concerned Cameron may think it could provide her with a way home.



MONROE & SAM TYLER

Detective Inspector Tyler arrived in Portland claiming his transfer from the Greater Manchester Police Department was due to being in a coma. Having made sure everyone understood that they were figments of his imagination, he proved extremely capable, recruiting Monroe as his informant. Tyler hasn't stopped telling everyone how ridiculous it is that he's working with a werewolf, even though they became best friends in days. We're sure Tyler will embrace Portland and decide that it's the reality he wants, even if it's not true. Monroe just looks happy to have the company.

1. THE CONCEPT IS INSANE

➤ The pitch for *Sleepy Hollow* might have sounded mad on paper because, well, it was. What was so surprising and welcome about the first episode was how quickly and smoothly all these things made sense. From the opening scene of Ichabod ducking the Headless Horseman's axe to Lieutenant Abbie Mills pulling her gun on the same stumped foe, it was clear that the show somehow had a firm grip on its concept and understood how to make its different elements work together. "I thought either this is going to be an amazing show or it's going to totally not be anything good at all," laughs Katia Winter, who plays Ichabod's wife Katrina. "I thought it would do really well with the fans, but I didn't expect it to do so well with the critics. I thought they would think it was silly and stupid and whatnot, but somehow it just all worked."

2. IT'S GOT SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

If you're missing supernatural procedurals like *Fringe* or even *The X-Files*, *Sleepy Hollow* is the antidote to those blues, but with its breakneck plotting, small-town madness and plenty of big emotional moments, it's also *Twin Peaks* meets *Buffy*. "I think that it has a little bit of everything," Winter enthuses. "I didn't expect it to be funny, and obviously Tom Mison is very funny. Then there's also a seriousness to it and the action and the science fiction and the fantasy aspect of it; it's kind of a mix of all things. I've heard somebody say, 'I'm so happy, finally I've found a show that my boyfriend and I can watch together.' It has some eye candy for all the females, it has the action for the men [laughs], and it has great characters."

3. GRADE-A CHEMISTRY

If you're looking for a great TV partnership, look no further than Captain Ichabod Crane and Lieutenant Abbie Mills. From the first episode their chemistry together was immediately apparent, and watching Tom Mison and Nicole Beharie develop their relationship has been one of the real joys of the show. Their back-and-forth is evenly matched, as he bemoans the modern world and she punctures his moral superiority, all the while creating a strong bond, of course. That the whole cast works together as well as they do is even more impressive given that Winter reveals that they didn't have much time together before the cameras rolled. "We met for the first time when we started the shooting the pilot the day before," she tells us. "It could have gone wrong, but luckily we all got along really well, and the chemistry is definitely there."



Tom Mison stars as man-out-of-time Ichabod Crane.



Viewers have quickly taken to the show's unique tone.



SLEEPY HOLLOW

Nicole Beharie rounds off the double act as Lt Abbie Mills.

4. STRONG FEMALE CHARACTERS

While we are seeing more strong female leads, it's rare to find a show that has such a depth of strong, well-written women. The relationship between the two leads is very well-balanced, with Abbie a clever, capable and open-minded co-lead. Similarly, Abbie's sister Jenny (Lyndie Greenwood) has proven to be a fascinating supporting character, and over the course of the season Katrina's strength becomes clear, as we see what she's sacrificed and how important her choices have been. "I remember speaking to [co-creators Alex Kurtzman and Roberto Orci]," Winter tells us. "They love writing strong female characters, and early on in the show I knew that was something that Katrina was going to become, but you don't necessarily understand that in the beginning. It's throughout the season you get to know her more and more, definitely more in Season Two. Then you really get to know her strength. The same with Abbie and Jenny, I really like that. It's about time, I want to see more of that kind of thing."

5. REAL HORROR

You couldn't make a show called *Sleepy Hollow* and leave out the Headless Horseman and his predilection for separating heads from shoulders, and it was great to see the pilot episode enthusiastically continue this tradition. However, it hasn't stopped there. Over the course of the first season our heroes have had to confront a relentless tide of wonderfully designed monsters, from golems to tree demons. "The pilot was quite extreme, and I didn't necessarily think that they were going to continue on that route," laughs Winter. "You know the pilot is usually what catches peoples' eyes, and then they fade, but it's actually escalated! It's becoming more and more intense, and more and more creatures are coming to life, and it's more scary."

"I THOUGHT
EITHER THIS
IS GOING
TO BE AN
AMAZING
SHOW OR
IT'S GOING
TO TOTALLY
NOT BE
ANYTHING
GOOD AT ALL"

KATIA
WINTER

6. FLASHBACKS

These days, you just can't have a supernatural show without some good old-fashioned flashbacks, and *Sleepy Hollow* is currently challenging *The Vampire Diaries* when it comes to putting its characters in 18th Century regalia. As Ichabod pieces together the supernatural circumstances that led to his hibernation and the current apocalyptic threat, we're shown more and more of his and Katrina's life together. "I love it," says Winter. "My sets are so different to everyone else's because it's the 18th Century, so everyone else shoots in modern day times. And I think it's incredible being on set when everyone is dressed in costumes with horses and carriages. It's almost like you're travelling back in time."

7. FAREWELL, YOLANDA

Ichabod is continually finding things about the 21st Century that confuse or irritate him, from the proliferation of Starbucks ("Is there a law?") to the current sales tax ("How is the public not flocking to the streets in outrage? We must do something"). However, at no point during *Sleepy Hollow* has Ichabod's fish-out-of-water romanticism been better conveyed as it was in "The Lesser Key Of Solomon," as our man out of time engages in a strangely moving heart-to-heart with the NorthStar security operator as he tries to unlock the car he's trapped in. "I offer this tale, no matter how cruelly he may have treated you, to suggest that you do not give up. Nor give in to anything less than certainty in matters of the heart... It is I who should thank you, kind woman, for unlocking this vehicle from afar, and showing me how the entertainment system operates. Farewell, Yolanda." "Thank you for calling NorthStar Assistance," comes the sobbing response. Fits of giggles covered hearts melting everywhere. ➤

8. THE COAT

➤ Naysayers may sneer about Ichabod keeping his 18th Century clothes, but would you really want to see him without his signature outfit and that glorious coat? "A sign of the apocalypse is skinny jeans," deadpans Ichabod. "He has nothing to hold onto his past, so the clothes symbolise a lot for him," opines Winter. "He's kind of clinging onto them as trying to remember where he came from and who he is. So, a change of clothes? Yes, absolutely. But it would take away so much of his character if he was just to wear just a T-shirt and jeans. I know a lot of people don't like his pants. 'When is he going to take off those pants?' And I'm like, 'What do you mean? They're really sexy!'"

9. NOTHING STAYS DEAD

Death is not the end on *Sleepy Hollow*, and the showrunners know a good guest star when they see one. Clancy Brown's Sheriff August Corbin has resurfaced in flashbacks and dream sequences after taking an axe to the chin in the pilot, providing Abbie with guidance and the show with Brown's inimitable gravitas. Even better, however, is John Cho's Andy Brooks, who recovered from a broken neck to become one of the season's most watchable characters, as the lovelorn former deputy fights his role as Moloch's voice in the mortal realm.

10. GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BIBLE

Sleepy Hollow has constructed an alternate history that acts as a framework rather than a be-all-and-end-all. With Ichabod a veteran of the American revolutionaries' high command, he's got all the gossip on the founding fathers. More importantly, the battle he and Abbie are fighting is a continuation of the conflict he already fought, and as the show progresses the links to the past grow stronger. "I heard in the second meeting I had with them that it's not only the book of Revelations; it's going to be a lot more than that," remembers Winter. "There's stuff

Katia Winter, who plays Katrina Crane, is full of praise for the show.

THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

Apocalypses that had to be averted

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

She may have saved the world a lot, but Buffy's life as a Slayer finally came to an end (on TV, at least) when she beat The First with the help of the Scooby Gang, the Potentials and, most of all, Spike's self-sacrifice. School's out for bloody summer.

SUPERNATURAL

Much like Buffy, the Winchester boys have faced plenty of apocalypses in their time and lived to tell the tale (barring the occasional, well, death). The Four Horsemen themselves made an appearance in Season Five, as Dean and Sam fought their destiny as vessels and Castiel exploded.

ULTRAVIOLET

This short-lived Channel 4 show starred Jack Davenport, Idris Elba and Susannah Harker as a covert British unit fighting the growing tide of vampires (or leeches, to use *Ultraviolet's* lexicon). Grim, well-acted and creative, it all built to a tense finale as Stephen Moyer forced our hero to choose between killing the woman he loves or letting London be overrun.

DOLHOUSE

Eliza Dushku's Echo fought the apocalypse of her show's cancellation, which she eventually lost, but the dolls did put the world to rights in Joss Whedon's show's two post-apocalyptic flash-forward episodes. The 'Epitaph' season finales were arguably *Dollhouse's* high point.

TORCHWOOD

Much-heralded US/UK co-production *Miracle Day* had star power and a neat concept: what if everyone stopped dying? Unfortunately, the series was a dud: saggy, uninspired and muddled. However, the team did prevent the end of the world, and they gave Gwen all the best bits.



"IT'S BECOMING MORE AND MORE INTENSE AND MORE AND MORE CREATURES ARE COMING TO LIFE" **KATIA WINTER**

they weren't able to do for several reasons in Season One; they're saving up for Season Two. There's a lot more stories that they're going to bring to life, so you never know!"

II. ICHABBY? ICHATRINA?

Despite the fact that Ichabod is married to – and very much in love with – Katrina, fans have decided to create a love triangle, with many believing the obvious chemistry between Crane and Abbie should lead to a relationship. "It's there because of the fans!" laughs Winter. "The fans are going crazy about Ichabby and Ichatrina! Which is fun, it's good to see them so invested! I'm not really sure where I stand; obviously, things could change if I get out of purgatory and we meet again. I hope for the sake of the show that they kind of leave that, at least for a little bit. I like the dynamic between Abby and Ichabod; it's kind of like they're friends, but a little flirty. There's chemistry there, and I think that's way more exciting than if they were to start dating."

12. JOHN NOBLE

With *Fringe* co-creators Alex Kurtzman and Robert Orci working on *Sleepy Hollow*, it was inevitable that the two shows would share some similarities. This was confirmed in the best possible way when the recurring role of sin eater Henry Parrish was given

to Walter Bishop himself: John Noble. "He's fantastic," enthuses Winter. "The scenes with John were the most fun to shoot. It makes you a better actor working with good actors, so it's inspiring. He's such a lovely person as well, very down to earth and funny. He tries to crack me up between takes all the time!"

13. SEASON TWO IS COMING

After that pilot, Fox wasted no time in ordering a second season, and we can't wait to see how the show will develop. Given how insane and breathless the first season was, how can Season Two match up? "Season Two is going to be very different," teases Winter. "The purgatory stuff has been so painful, and Katrina has been through so much and she's stuck in this hell, so it's been definitely about time she gets taken out or saved. I've been talking to [producers] Mark Gothman and Alex Kurtzman about my character for Season Two, and there's some crazy amazing ideas. I was blown away when I heard what they were planning to do. I definitely want to see [Katrina] use more magic, because you know she's a witch, but you haven't seen her use any magic really."

Sleepy Hollow: Season One is available on Blu-Ray, Season Two is currently airing on Fox.



TAKING AIM

ARROW'S THIRD SEASON IS LOOKING TO BE ITS BEST YET, WITH EVEN MORE ACTION AS TEAM ARROW WRESTLE WITH THEIR IDENTITIES AND COME TO BLOWS WITH RA'S AL CHUL. SCIFINOW CAUGHT UP WITH STARS EMILY BETT RICKARDS AND COLTON HAYNES TO FIND OUT MORE...



SOMEONE, A FRIEND, ONCE TOLD ME THAT IF YOU SURVIVE A CRUCIBLE YOU GROW THE STRONGER FOR IT." THESE WORDS, SPOKEN BY OLIVER QUEEN (STEPHEN AMELL) IN

the Season Two finale 'Unthinkable', are fitting, as *Arrow* too has gone through its own crucible. The show shrugged off tired *Dark Knight* comparisons and scepticism to emerge at the forefront of DC's ever-expanding television output – which is expanding this year with spin-off *The Flash*, as well as *Gotham* and *Constantine*.

The second season saw Oliver transition from vigilante to hero, able to dispense justice without taking lives, and by the season's finale Team Arrow was riding high.

Slade 'Deathstroke' Wilson (Manu Bennett) and his Mirakuru-fuelled army were defeated – without killing – while the ARGUS drone strike on Starling City was averted. Oliver's loyal cohort John Diggle (David Ramsey) even found out that he and Lyla (Audrey Marie Anderson) were going to be parents.

The series ended on a triumphant note, but teased myriad unanswered questions: what happened to Oliver in Hong Kong, where he ended up in the season's last flashback? How will Thea (Willa Holland) change under Malcolm Merlyn (John Barrowman)'s 'care', and what will Roy (Colton Haynes)'s new moniker be as he finally becomes Oliver's official sidekick?

Season Three picks up several months later. Crime is at an all-time low, and Captain Quentin Lance (Paul Blackthorne)

has called off the Anti-Vigilante Task Force. Season premiere 'The Calm' kicks off with a James Bond-style intro, according to Amell.

He told Montreal Comic Con: "We start off the third season with a gigantic action set piece. You've seen pieces of it in the preview for Season Three – it's myself, Diggle, Roy in his whole costume, and of course, Felicity at the helm. It's just all of us kicking ass."

Everything appears to be coming up Milhouse. Oliver asks Felicity out on a date, seeing a chance to balance being the Arrow with being Oliver Queen, while giving Tumblr GIF ideas for the next six months.

But the life of a superhero is never that simple, with the new Count Vertigo (Peter Stormare) appearing on the scene to shake Oliver out of his complacency.

He also has a potential rival for Felicity's affections in the form of Queen Consolidated's new owner: square-jawed entrepreneur Ray Palmer (better known in the comics as The Atom), played by former Superman Brandon Routh. The actor recently revealed that he had seen drawings of his Atom costume, so a dramatic reveal looks likely before the end of the season.

Identity is a central theme, and not just for Oliver, according to producer and co-creator Marc Guggenheim: "Every other character on the show is dealing with some question of identity," he says. "Detective Lance, who is now Captain Lance, has basically taken a desk job, and is asking, 'If I can't be a cop the way I used to be, what am I?'"

"Laurel is going to be dealing with this question of identity as she tries to walk the path that her sister walks. Is Thea Malcolm Merlyn's daughter or Moira Queen's daughter? Diggle: 'Am I a sidekick, am I my own man?' Felicity: 'Do I have my own identity?'"

Judging from their heated confrontation in the trailer, Oliver wants John out of the field – presumably because Daddy Diggle has far more to lose. Don't count him out this season ➤

Opposite and below: Colton Haynes gets into costume, joining Stephen Amell's masked hero. Centre: Things are set to heat up between Felicity and Oliver.



Below: 'Olicity' at work.
Bottom: New threats abound with Peter Stormare as Count Vertigo.

though; with Lyla head of ARGUS, it's safe to say that Diggle will be more involved with them, not to mention the already introduced Suicide Squad, as well as looking for answers about HIVE – the organisation that hired Deadshot (Michael Rowe) to kill his brother.

With Thea gone, Roy's focus will be on fighting crime in his new secret identity. But is that Speedy, Red Arrow or Arsenal?

"I think that's going to be the joke of Season Three," Haynes says. "The guys will say 'Hey Speedy!' while I'm all, 'I said don't call me that.' Roy will be Arsenal, but they're going to play with it first, trying to find my nickname. I think he'll have the characteristics of Red Arrow – Arsenal was really troubled and a drug addict."

Roy's Mirakuru rampage resulted in Season Two ultimately resulting in the death of a police officer, and while he has no memory of doing this due to his withdrawal-induced amnesia, Haynes thinks the past will come back to haunt him. "I have a feeling that there really is no real cure," he tells us. "It will be interesting to watch if Mirakuru comes back into his life, or someone else on Team Arrow – I love that I can say that now!"

AFTER TWO SEASONS IN HIS RED HOODIE, HAYNES SAYS IT'S "TIME TO SEE HIM SUIT UP." IN FACT, THE NEW ARSENAL COSTUME LOOKS SO GOOD THAT AMELL HAS JOKED

about the Arrow suit now being "the second nicest suit on the show." Sartorial jealousy aside, will acting as mentor to Roy bring out Oliver's lighter side?

"Oliver is going to start giving Roy more to do, and their brotherly connection is going to grow stronger. Stephen is awesome to work with, and I've never seen someone so busy in all my life. I also get to work with Emily more, which is really cool. She's the best."

As with any tight-knit group, there will be trouble ahead. "There will be secret bonds between a few on the team that they're hiding from the others," he teases "and it'll eventually cause a rift between them. Thea's left the city, but I have the feeling she'll come back wearing a lot of black. She's heartbroken that everyone's been lying to her, so she's going to stir up trouble."

The one-time bratty socialite's world was shattered when she discovered that she was actually the child of an affair between her soon-to-be late mother Moira (Susanna Thompson) and the ruthless Malcolm Merlyn. With Roy and Thea both in training, there could be an intense lovers' reunion further down the line.

"Roy still has feelings for Thea – that's going to be the difficult part," says Haynes. "The grass is always greener with Roy. His main goal was to join up with Arrow, but he got kind of scuffed off and ran back to Thea. He's always having to lie to everybody because it's been this fight between the woman he loves and his path in life."

"I can hint that a new love interest for Roy is on its way. There are a few in the comic-books, but I honestly don't know which one it could be."

One thing's for sure: it won't be Felicity. "People already hate Roy!" he laughs. "If I tried to break 'Olicity' up, I'd be ousted. I won a poll for the least-liked character, which Emily showed me because she was the most liked. She's read every single thing in the world [about the comics]."

The reaction to the DC characters added to the Arrow-verse last season was largely positive, particularly the Harley Quinn Easter egg in 'Suicide Squad'. But what other characters would Haynes like to see join the cast?

"I think I said the Hulk the other day, but that's Marvel so I should probably retract that," he says. "Everyone is just obsessed with Harley Quinn, and I didn't really know anything about the character until she came on and people lost their minds. ➤

"PEOPLE ALREADY
HATE ROY! IF I
TRIED TO BREAK
'OLICITY' UP, I'D
BE OUSTED"
COLTON HAYNES

THE LONGBOW HUNTERS

Some of the new characters to expect this season on Arrow



MATT NABLE IS RA'S AL GHUL

The leader of the League of Assassins and Nyssa al Ghul (Katrina Law)'s father. Traditionally one of Batman's greatest foes, he was mentioned throughout Season Two, and will show up in Three. Ra's trained both Sara Lance and Malcolm Merlyn, who have unfinished business.



BRANDON ROUTH IS RAY PALMER/THE ATOM

Queen Consolidated's new CEO, Palmer is a business rival of Oliver's. With Oliver broke, trying to get his company back and getting closer to Felicity, the last thing he'll want is someone taking over his company and making a move on Miss Smoak – especially with a jawline like that.



PETER STORMARE IS WERNER ZYTLE/COUNT VERTIGO

The first villain Team Arrow faces in Season Three, Werner Zytel replaces the Count (Seth Gable) as maker of the drug Vertigo – from which he gets his codename. Stormare was a delightfully creepy Lucifer in 2005's *Constantine*, so we expect good but decidedly weird things from him.



NICK TARABAY IS GEORGE 'DIGGER' HARKNESS/CAPTAIN BOOMERANG

A former ARGUS operative out for revenge who uses boomerangs to take down his foes. Traditionally one of The Flash's enemies, he will reportedly appear in *The Flash/Arrow* crossover event.



JR RAMIREZ IS TED GRANT/WILDCAT

In the comic-books, Wildcat is a member of the Justice Society for America, and a massively important figure in Black Canary's life. Grant will appear on the show as a former boxer with a mysterious past who now runs a gym for underprivileged youths.



DAVID CUBITT IS MARK SHAW/MANHUNTER

Not to be confused with the Martian Manhunter, Shaw will appear as an ARGUS agent in Corto Maltese who crosses paths with Diggle. Cubitt is currently slated to appear in the third episode of the series. In comic lore he has a connection to the Suicide Squad.



RILA FUKUSHIMA IS TATSU YAMASHIRO/KATANA

Tatsu and her husband Maseo (Karl Yune) will appear in Oliver's Hong Kong flashbacks as his handlers. Both skilled in martial arts, Tatsu's nickname comes from her choice of weapon. Fukushima was one of the best things to come out of *The Wolverine*.



AMY GUMENICK IS CARRIE CUTTER/CUPID

The *Supernatural* actress will guest star in *Arrow* as Carrie Cutter – also known as Cupid – a crazed fan of the Arrow who shows her love in terrifying ways. Sort of like Becky, the fangirl who was obsessed with Gumenick's screen children, Sam and Dean Winchester.



MATT WARD IS SIMON LACROIX/KOMODO

Tron: Legacy's Matt Ward will play Komodo early on in the show's run, and the story will be tied in to the series' main story arc. Another archer with a deadly aim, the character in the comics was once the protégé of Oliver Queen's father, Robert.

➤ “Robin is probably my favourite; I like the sidekicks. In everything I’ve done I’ve been the angry jock asshole, so it’s nice to play that, because Stephen can hold the reins. There are a lot of similarities between Roy and Robin this season, and you know there are always possibilities for other sidekicks to join the show. Everyone’s talking about *Nightwing*, and then there’s *Young Justice*.”

WHEN SARA (CAITY LOTZ) DRAPED HER BLACK JACKET OVER LAUREL (KATIE CASSIDY)’S SHOULDERS BEFORE LEAVING FOR NANDA PARBAT, THEIR

father seemed to anticipate the audience’s reaction: “Don’t get any ideas.”

Sara will be back as a recurring character in the third season. However, it seems as if the question of her sister taking up the mantle of Black Canary – as she does in the comics – is nearing an answer.

Laurel will be working more closely with Team Arrow since learning Oliver’s secret. Most significantly, JR Ramirez will join the series this year as Ted ‘Wildcat’ Grant, a former boxer and, in the comics, the character who trained Black Canary to fight.

Whether this spells an untimely end for Sara remains to be seen. Cassidy has kept quiet on the details of Laurel’s arc, but has shown off her biceps in recent interviews, leaving fans with a good idea of where her character is heading.

Casting news for Season Three has opened up a world of rumours, theories and speculation, with characters including Katana (Rila Fukushima), Captain Boomerang (Nick Tarabay), Manhunter (David Cubitt) and Komodo (Matt Ward) making appearances this year. But the news that *Riddick* star Matt Nable would be playing iconic villain Ra’s al Ghul has blown everything else out of the water. The question on everyone’s lips is when will he make his presence felt in Starling City?

The Demon’s Head – as he is sometimes called in the comics – is to appear in *Arrow*’s 50th episode, which may shed light on Malcolm’s time with the League of Assassins. Since his ‘Undertaking’ (in which he laid waste to a swathe of the city) has put Malcolm firmly on the League’s shit-list, it may be an explosive showdown, or perhaps lead to an Arrow/Dark Archer team-up.

Executive producer Andrew Kreisberg said at Comic-Con: “We wanted to do something that we hadn’t done before. Malcolm had a specific agenda, and in Season Two, Slade’s plan was about revenge.

Bottom: Ex-Superman Brandon Routh will star as Ray Palmer, aka The Atom. Opposite: Will Laurel take the place of her sister Sara (bottom), as the Black Canary? And what’s in store for the new ‘Captain’ Lance (middle)?

“For Season Three, we wanted a new challenge for Oliver. The villain speaks to the emotional theme of the season, which is, ‘Can I be both the Arrow and Oliver Queen at the same time?’”

Olicity fans have had the whole summer to ponder if that tender moment on the beach after the ruse-that-broke-a-million-hearts could mean something more.

“How’s your heart?” asks Emily Bett Rickards, insisting that we sit with her on the same couch and talk it over. It would be rude to say no to Felicity Smoak, MIT class of ‘09.

“They were about to feed you that second bit of cake, and then they took it away,” she says with a devilish smile.

Miss Smoak has a priceless habit of blurting out the wrong thing, and her nervous, socially awkward schtick has made

her character hugely endearing. She isn’t shy about teasing Oliver – it’s a dynamic that’s kept him from veering towards too many emotionally stunted heroine clichés, and made their friendship more realistic. Rickards believes they need each other.

“She’s so well-rounded. She’s still figuring everything out, and that’s why people relate to her, because nobody has figured stuff out. Oliver feels like he has, but she’s the one saying, ‘you haven’t!’ That’s why Oliver needed Felicity, and she needed him.”

The pair start off the season on a real date, but Rickards is sceptical about them as a couple.

“I think Olicity is a popular idea, but I don’t know as an audience member if I really want that,” she says. “Because everyone loves torture. The fans love that they need to

Flash Lightning

The worlds of *The Flash* and *Arrow* will cross over in a two-hour special. The CW is airing the first season of *The Flash* a day before new *Arrow*, and both shows’ eighth episodes will make up a two-hour crossover special.

Emily Bett Rickards, whose character Felicity Smoak got close to Barry Allen (Grant Gustin) when he was introduced in Season Two, will also appear in the series. The actress said she was keen to feature on the show, but hoped some surprise cameos wouldn’t be leaked. “*The Flash* needs to be its own show. They’ll maybe have the odd surprise, but I hope it doesn’t leak, because I’d love for people to be watching and think, ‘Oh my God! Your heart goes a little crazy, and it’s so cool when you don’t know.’”

Arrow’s Colton Haynes says *The Flash* highlights just how big the *Arrow* universe is getting.

“It’s only going to keep growing. Grant [Gustin] is the coolest person in the world, you guys are going to love him. Grant has this great quirkiness and heroism to him.”



ask for it. But I'm like that too: 'Mom, I really want that red bike for Christmas. Okay, and now I want a basket!'"

Rickards is much-loved by the *Arrow* fan base, and it's not hard to see why. The gritty first season needed a ray of dorky sunshine, and she was the perfect counterbalance to Oliver's seriousness. To think she was only supposed to be a one-off guest star.

"I was supposed to be in that one episode, and Stephen sang my praises. The show needed her too – I mean, she's the light part of the show. It's a good thing I didn't completely bomb.

"Felicity is a strong woman on television. There has to be more of that, and I mean independently strong."

While there have certainly been many physically tough women on TV, the Canadian actress feels that all too often they are "sexed up", while Felicity manages to be a tenacious, intelligent and desirable woman on her own terms, and she doesn't need a superpower to fit in.

"I don't want to take the sensuality away from it, because I think it's important for women to say, 'I can be sexy, smart and strong.' That's a good thing. Kerry Washington in *Scandal* is all of those things.

"She's super smart, so I think that puts her in

the calibre of having a superpower. I guess maybe if she could read minds – no, actually she'd hate that."

THE FIFTH EPISODE OF THE NEW SEASON, 'THE SECRET ORIGIN OF FELICITY SMOAK', WILL FLASH BACK TO FELICITY'S TIME AT MIT, AND FLESH OUT SOME OF HER PAST.

"We get to explore more character back stories," she says. "The first season was finding out about the vigilante, and the second was him becoming the Arrow. Now, we have this huge ensemble cast, so many strong characters and a solid story base, we're going to be able to see more of them."

Since taking on the role, Rickards has become a comic reader herself, firing out the phrase "Firestorm's stepmom" at the very mention of her character's origins in *Green Arrow*. Colton did say she knew her stuff.

"I'm getting better," she beams. "I didn't know them before, but I'm a huge reader. And now I can relate to them. It's interesting to see Felicity in the comics now that it looks like me. I know she will be in them more frequently, so that's very cool."

As for the future of her character and the show going into its third year, Rickards thinks having more allies in the inner sanctum will be exciting for the team, and that Felicity is perhaps less wide-eyed than she once was.

"Her naivety is sort of disintegrating – her innocence. But 'hopeful' is a good word for her. I might add that to her vocabulary of adjectives. Having Roy more in the team will be interesting, as it's mainly been the three of them [Oliver, Felicity and Diggle]. Plus, it was so nice having another woman in the Foundry when we had Sara."

Amell said recently that while he missed the Hood from Season One, he liked the Arrow better, but "I think that I would like being the Green Arrow best," so it seems that the character and series are still on a journey.

Third seasons can often prove definitive; from the reveal of Locutus of Borg in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* to the introduction of Faith in *Buffy* – it's the year the groundwork pays off.

Arrow has come a long way and done the seemingly impossible: keeping existing *Green Arrow* fans happy while intriguing newcomers. With so many challenges ahead for the established ensemble, and an expanding cast of villains and allies plundered from the rich back catalogues of the DC universe, Season Three looks like it will be *Arrow*'s most ambitious yet.

Arrow is airing now on The CW in the US, and Season Two is available on Blu-Ray.

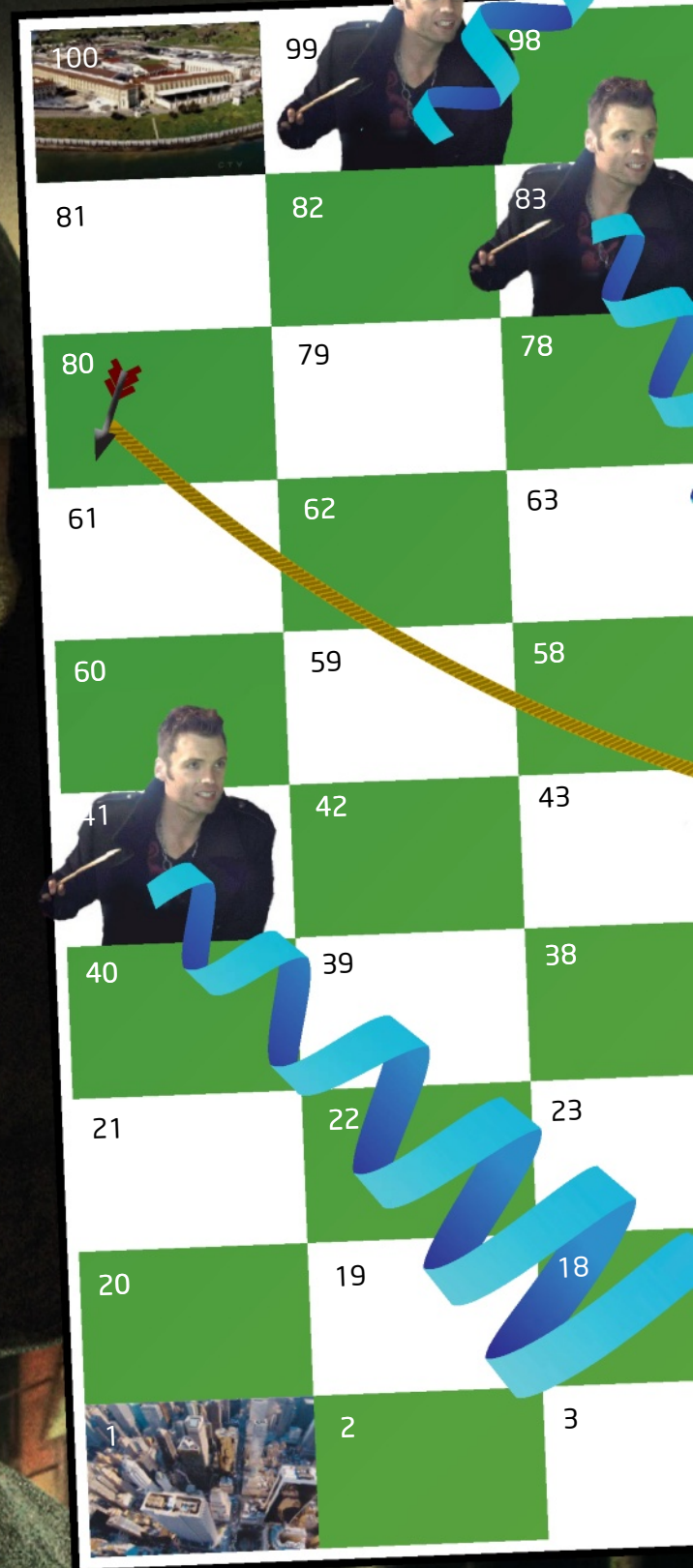


"HER NAIVETY IS DISINTEGRATING – HER INNOCENCE. BUT 'HOPEFUL' IS A GOOD WORD FOR HER"
EMILY BETT RICKARDS



VERTIGO & ARROWS

THE COUNT IS ON THE LOOSE IN STARLING CITY, YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS MUST RACE TO BRING HIM TO JUSTICE!



THE RULES

1. The aim of Vertigo & Arrows is to be the first player to reach Iron Heights by moving across the board from square 1 to square 100.
2. Every player takes a counter which they place just off square 1 - Starling City - and rolls a die. The lowest scorer takes the first turn. If two or more people roll the same number, they must roll again but they keep their position relative to the other players. For example, if Roy, Felicity and Diggle are playing, Roy rolls a 3 and Felicity and Diggle both roll a six - Roy will still move first, even if the others roll less than a 3. Does that make sense? Did explaining it make it even worse?
3. You each take it in turns to move, rolling a die (not inc.) each time and moving that number of squares in your hunt for The Count.
4. If you land on handsome vigilante Oliver Queen, you can travel up the grappling line he's fired from his bow to a new square.
5. If you land on The Count, he jabs you with Vertigo and you must follow the spiral down to a lower square (or off the board, and you automatically lose). He really is a dick.



COUNTERS



66 I HAVE
STAYED
REASONABLY
SANE 65
FREDDIE HIGHMORE

DREAD & BREAKFAST

WE BOOK A ROOM FOR A NIGHT IN HORROR'S MOST NOTORIOUS MOTEL AND PEER BEHIND THE CURTAINS AND BEHIND THE SCENES FOR BATES MOTEL SEASON TWO

EACH TO THEIR OWN, BUT THERE IS SOMETHING ODD – CREEPY, EVEN – ABOUT TAXIDERMISTRY. HAVING A HOBBY THAT INVOLVES BEING SURROUNDED BY ANIMAL CORPSES all day isn't exactly a conventional pastime. But standing in the taxidermy studio of a certain Norman Bates dials the creepiness level up to around 11, and that's where SciFiNow is on a rainy November day, just outside Vancouver, on the set of *Bates Motel*.

The hit US show, serving as a modern-day prequel to Alfred Hitchcock's iconic *Psycho*, charts the progress of a young Norman from a somewhat normal teenager to the horrific psychopath we met in the 1960 film, famously played by Anthony Perkins. Stuffing dead pets is just the start, though. In Season One, Norman, played by Brit actor Freddie Highmore (*Charlie And The Chocolate Factory*) is introduced to the weird

pastime by the father of his best friend, Emma Decody (another Brit, Olivia Cooke) and this year, the psycho-in-waiting becomes more enamoured with the joys of filling animals with sand – and now he has an eerie-looking basement studio in which to practice his art.

It is here, seemingly in the genesis of Norman's dark and twisted mind, that we are being stared at by an eagle with a frozen expression, next to a bowl of plastic eyeballs. But Highmore doesn't think there is anything particularly wrong with his character's new favourite pastime. "It's just a hobby. Everyone needs a hobby," laughs Highmore. "He creates his own workshop, and it starts off with road kill, various animals that he finds outside the motel that he then starts to stuff and keep. And he's still got his nice little pet dog – that's now in Norman's bedroom – his first creation."

Last time we saw young Norman, he was staggering along a dark road in the rain, back to the motel and the arms of his loving mother Norma (Vera Farmiga), having possibly just brutally murdered his teacher, Miss Watson, although he has no recollection of doing such a thing. Did he kill her? Given all we know about who young Norman becomes, it's likely that he was the one who viciously slashed her throat. And after finding out midway through the first season that his father's mysterious death was in fact a case of patricide with a blender, with Norman again having no memory of it, a pattern of killing is starting to emerge. As Norman is bright enough to realise that something is amiss with the events of the fatal evening, he is slowly becoming more cognisant of his demons.

"Even if Norman doesn't remember what exactly he was doing that night, ➤

MUMMY'S BOY

Star Freddie Highmore on going from being the boy with the golden ticket in *Charlie And The Chocolate Factory* to “the cutest little psycho killer”

Are things going to get any better for Norman this season? How's his love life?

There's a new love interest that comes in the second season, so I guess we will have to see how that all comes together. It is someone who we haven't met yet, who comes in as Norman's new immediate love interest. But those feelings for Emma towards Norman are still there, and Norman's feelings towards Bradley haven't just dissipated.

Is it difficult knowing how your character ends up?

Certainly the character has no knowledge of it, but in terms of mapping out the arc of the character, I've actually found it to be quite useful knowing the end. I think some actors on other television shows might get a bit frustrated to, for example, be playing a character who they think for the first season is nice, and then at the end it's revealed that actually he's running the evil gang, and you think, 'Oh no, I haven't been playing that at all; I have just been playing this nice person.' Whereas with Norman there is never any chance of that. It's just about setting a time scale for that.

Do you ever think, 'I've got to put a slightly darker edge to everything he does' even when he's being nice?

Not necessarily, because I think the audience does that for you; they come in with this expectation that Norman is going to be a killer. One example is in the second season, there's a scene where Norman has a little dance. Kerry [Ehrin, executive producer] sent me a text saying how it was funny; it was “the cutest little psycho killer” she'd ever seen. That's the dark humour behind the show, like when you see Norman at a party trying to fit in by jiggling around to the music.

Do your family and friends treat you differently now you are Norman Bates?

They don't see me any differently; they don't hide kitchen knives away. I'm still allowed to do everything that I want to do. But I guess my friends have never seen me any differently, having done films before, so this doesn't really change their perception of me, luckily.

And has it changed you?

No, I have stayed reasonably sane. I don't feel that I have been too badly affected. You can verify – having been to visit me on set – that I'm not raging around like a psycho!



➤ it is incredibly odd to have been in the person's house when she died and not remember what happened,” admits Highmore. “He is going to try and put two and two together and think, ‘Oh, well, maybe I had something to do with it.’ There is a growing self-awareness in Norman of who he might become and who he might be. We know from the first season that he doesn't remember certain things about his life, but he will now start to question why he doesn't remember them. So that's an interesting place for the second season to start.”

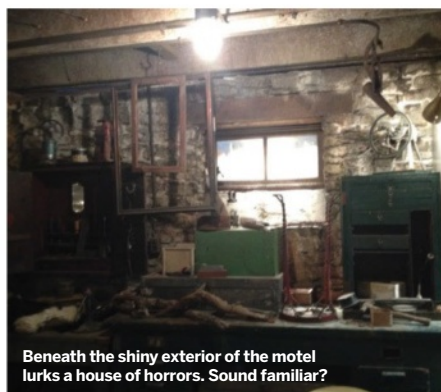
The show picks up in the aftermath of the murder, then rapidly skips forward four months, where we discover that the shiny new Bates Motel is doing a roaring trade, and everything in Norma and Norman's life is getting better and better after the traumas of the first season (you know, Norma being raped, Norma offing her rapist and enlisting Norman to help dump the body, Norma's short-term lover Deputy Shelby secretly

running an Asian sex ring, before Norma's eldest son and Norman's half-brother Dylan shot him outside the motel – that sort of trauma). But trouble is never far away for the dysfunctional duo, as an impending bypass threatens their livelihood. And Norma is not going to take it lying down.

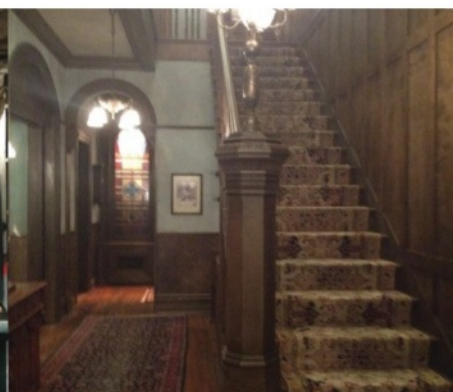
“This is her dream, coming here and being a motelier,” says Farmiga, when we speak to her later. “She is finally in a very successful, joyful part of her life, and is realising the life that she has ached to have, which is success, love and friendship. That's what she is seeking for herself and for Norman. She is not going to give that up easily.”

BACK ON THE SOUNDSTAGE IN VANCOUVER, WHERE THE INTERNAL SETS FOR THE SHOW HAVE BEEN LOVINGLY ASSEMBLED, WE'RE LED AROUND THE CAVERNOUS STUDIO

and treated to some incredible sights. The inside of Norma's house on the hill is constructed almost entirely as it appears,



Beneath the shiny exterior of the motel lurks a house of horrors. Sound familiar?



with a front door leading to hall, kitchen, sitting room, and the staircase ascending to a landing with doors all around that actually lead to nowhere. But the most notable detail about the interior of the Bates' abode is the incredible number of photographs that adorn every flat surface and virtually every inch of wall space.

To say that Norma is a little obsessed with her son is a huge understatement. There are dozens of pictures of Norman at every age (all actual shots of Freddie Highmore as a kid), alongside even more pictures of Norma holding a baby at various stages of growth (actually images of Vera Farmiga with her own children). It would be very cute in any other house, but in the home of the Bates, we know it speaks volume to the mother's twisted relationship with her son.

Farmiga tries to explain Norma's inability to allow her son to break away from those maternal apron strings, and why she has to cuddle him so much in that uncomfortable-



"IT'S SAFE TO SAY THAT NORMAN GOT A LITTLE BIT OF HIS CRAZINESS FROM HIS MUM"

MAX THIÉRIOT

to-watch way. "It is difficult for Norma, because she has no other confidants in her life," she says. "Norman is her best friend, so that neediness fits into the physicality. She sees him as – and is still treating him like – an eight-year old, not an 18-year old."

The next day, we head an hour outside of Vancouver, where the iconic Bates house stands atop a small hill, with the famous motel below. The set designers used the blueprints from *Psycho*, but they've added a few mod cons: guests can now use the free Wi-Fi, for example. But despite all the evidence pointing to us being in the 21st Century, the impending residence towering over the whole property instills the same sense of terror as Hitchcock's original.

Even the location, officially in Aldergrove, British Columbia, is itself a little weird. Producer Justis Greene tells of strange events that have occurred during filming. In the first season, the set was plagued by

wasps, something that the crew reported as never having been an issue in the area before. And this season, at dusk every night, thousands of crows fly over the set, scaring the bejesus out of everyone involved. The crows (joyously, a gathering of crows is a 'murder') – alleged to be the largest in North America – seem to have got their Hitchcock tales mixed up, but don't be surprised to see one end up in Norman's workshop before the season is out.

Around the back of the house, it's just a plain wooden wall with wooden steps up to various upstairs windows, so a director can shoot either Norma or Norman staring out of them, but there is nothing else inside. We are told that someone stuck a Hitchcock silhouette in one of the windows during a day's shooting in Season One, but no one is quite sure if it ever snuck into the broadcast episode. In keeping with Hitchcock's penchant for giving himself a cameo in his movies, look out for that ➤

Knowing what we know, don't expect a happy ending to the friendship between Emma and Norman.



PSYCHO ANALYSIS

While it's not hard to count the contributions Alfred Hitchcock made to cinema, he made a splash on the small screen too...

1 CREATOR CAMEO

Hitchcock sneaks into every film Joss Whedon cameos in *Buffy* episodes, and even the comics.

3 MACGUFFIN

Alfred Hitchcock popularised the term and used it in movies like *Psycho*. Every season of *Smallville* featured an object that characters would be obsessed with.

5 OVERBEARING MOTHER

Guys have the most domineering mums, as seen in *Psycho*. Hoyt Fortenberry was on a tight leash in *True Blood*.

2 ACTION SURVIVOR

The normal people who end up in extraordinary situations like *The Man Who Knew Too Much*. Nerd Herder Chuck Bartowski becomes a super-spy in *Chuck*.

4 AUTHOR APPEAL

The majority of female characters will be blonde. The cast of *Hollyoaks*.

6 FREUDIAN EXCUSE

The villain had an abusive childhood and that's why they're evil. *Farscape*'s Scorpius had a tough upbringing by the Scarrans, which is why he hates them.



➤ little Easter Egg if you re-watch the first ten episodes.

The motel, however, is very different from the house. There are four complete rooms, with fully functioning showers – there is even ‘Bates Motel’ soap and shampoo for the discerning guest who is brave enough to stand under the famous jets. But in the room we are currently standing in, we are faced by video monitors showing the scene they are filming up by the front door of the house, a tense stand-off between Norma and Sheriff Romero (*Lost*’s Nestor Carbonell), with the latter demanding to see Norman. Is he finally going to get his comeuppance for his murderous indiscretions? Doubtful.

THIS SEASON, SHERIFF ROMERO GETS MORE INVOLVED WITH THE DANGEROUS FAMILY/ CARBONELL, IN HIS SHERIFF’S OUTFIT, SITS DOWN TO ADDRESS WHAT’S IN STORE FOR

him. “My character will be more interwoven into the fabric of the dysfunctional family of the Bates, Dylan and Emma, and he will certainly be more present in the motel,” Carbonell tells us. “There will even be circumstances that lead to him actually becoming a guest.”

“NORMAN IS JUST LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE, EXCEPT FOR THIS LITTLE THING THAT MAKES HIM GO A LITTLE MAD AT TIMES”

FREDDIE HIGHMORE

Outside the motel sit the characters’ cars, all in beautiful working order, from Romero’s hulking Sheriff’s cruiser and Norma’s classic Mercedes to Emma’s cute bright orange VW Beetle. Nothing is just for show, as Carbonell drives off set in his character’s vehicle back to the actors’ trailers that sit half a mile down the road so as not to be in any of the camera shots.

Back here, a large tent has been erected – replete with several space heaters, as it is literally freezing in Canada in early November – in which we get to chat to the cast members. Highmore, bundled up in as many layers as is possible, could not be further from the troubled boy he portrays, seeming as affable a chap as you could possibly wish to meet. He is even convinced that Norman is a sweet guy. Really.

“There are nice moments in the second season where you see him interacting as a normal guy, this normal teenager who’s coming to the end of school. It’s certainly pushed that Norman is just like everybody else, except for this little thing that makes him go a little mad at times.”

Farmiga is a bit distracted when she comes over to talk, as she has a huge monologue in the scene she is filming that



Norman’s new taxidermy hobby is as on-the-nose as allusions get.



For all its creepy forboding, at its heart *Bates Motel* is about a mother who loves her son – only too much, perhaps.

afternoon, so has been busy learning it all morning. She is also feeling under the weather, so is nursing a big cup of Russian vegetable soup while wearing a oversized, thick and gaudy jumper.

“Norma is a magnet for disaster, and crazy people do tend to gravitate towards her,” claims Farmiga. “But that is not necessarily the case this season. So it is interesting to see when there is some sort of semblance of normalcy, how that figures into her life in unexpected ways.”

Season One also saw the reintegration into the family fold of Norman’s half-brother Dylan, played by Max Thieriot, who managed to rack up a couple of dead bodies in his short time in White Pine Bay, and the 25-year-old actor believes/fears that his character could be heading in the same direction as his sibling.

“I think it’s safe to say that Norman got a little bit of his craziness from his mum, and being that she is also Dylan’s mum, I think that he has got his problems too,” admits Thieriot. “While he is not Norman – clearly – those issues do flare up every once in a while.”

This does not bode well for Bradley (Nicola Peltz), who both brothers love. Season Two sees her continuing the search for her father’s killer, and with the identity of her dad’s mistress being revealed in last year’s finale – then being brutally murdered – it is possible that things don’t get any easier for poor Bradley. Being the object of Norman’s affection is unlikely to end well.

Which is good news for Emma’s unrequited love for a certain Mr Bates, although British actress Cooke – with a surprisingly strong northern accent – doesn’t hold out a lot of hope for the odd couple, while revealing what is in store for the cystic-fibrosis suffering, oxygen tank-wielding Emma Decody.

“Emma is continuing to work at the motel. In the beginning, she and Norman go off on their separate ways with their own stories, but then events happen during the season which bring them together, but not in the way you may think. But she is continuing to try and infiltrate the Bates family and failing at it miserably,” admits Cooke. “She just wants to have a real family and looks up to Norma so, so much, and would just love her as a mother figure.”

We can’t think of anything scarier right now, except maybe Norman’s basement. As we leave the set late in the day, it is difficult not to stare back at that sinister house on the hill and feel the sense of foreboding that has been synonymous with the place since it was first introduced to the public back in the Sixties. In this iteration of the *Psycho* tale, Norman has not yet turned his mother into a mummy. But he has started to learn how...

Bates Motel Season Two is available on Blu-Ray.



MOTHER KNOWS BEST

Vera Farmiga reveals whose days are numbered in Season Two...

How is it playing the mother of a psycho?

It’s incredibly challenging for me, and I suppose that’s why I am grateful for this boutique ten-episode scenario. I don’t think I have the stamina to go more than ten episodes, because it is that demanding, emotionally and physically.

How do you relate to Norma?

I’m the mother of two toddlers at home, and so my role as a mother deepens this work. I understand now what lengths a mother will go to in order to defend her child. Sometimes we love our children so much that we don’t see clearly, and I see how my love for my children rules me.

Can you ever come to terms with the fact that it may actually be her fault, to a certain extent?

I don’t think it is just his relationship with mother, I think there are so many contributing factors. It’s a really delicate combination of all that, and this wasn’t the case of a mother loving her son not enough, but loving him too much. Obviously, he has grown up with a mother who is holding back a lifetime of grief, shame, pain and frustration, and her way of coping is that she’d prefer to look at it as creative visualisation. I would call it denial if I am going to be analysing it, but that’s her way of coping. The bottom line is that she wants a better life, she wants to know what normalcy means. That is the root word of her name, and Norman’s name.

It can’t be easy watching your son stuff animals for fun.

Norma is really worried about Norman and the extra-curricular activities he’s throwing himself into and the way he copes with his teacher’s death, which is really worrisome.

Do you think her intentions are good?

I find her to be kind of a typical mother. She doesn’t always do the right thing, but I know she means well in those decisions, like starting from decision one, the decision to move there. But for example, Keith Summers comes in. Does she handle that rape correctly? I find the gender bias very interesting sometimes, how people respond to that. OK, maybe it was one stab too much.

Who do you think is going to bite the dust next?

I know Max has become such a golden boy, and he is really great for demographics, so it’s probably not going to be Max. Honestly, I think Olivia [Cooke, who plays Emma] better watch out!



Gotham Confidential

WITH LUMINARIES LIKE TIM BURTON AND CHRISTOPHER NOLAN HAVING ALREADY COMMITTED THEIR OWN ICONIC ITERATIONS OF THE DARK KNIGHT TO CELLULOID, THE PRESSURE

on *Gotham* to deliver another compelling take on Batman mythos is high. However, executive producer Bruno Heller is aware of the task at hand.

"I've never really been involved with anything that had so much... weight is the wrong word, but resonance. It's both exciting and daunting, but great fun," he says. "But it wasn't so much the pressure that was the appeal. Instead, it was the chance to use such mythic characters. It sounds kind of crass to say this, but you're playing with house money when you're working with such resonant, great characters that so many people have done such great work with before. It has depth to it before you even start on it, and that's what attracted me to it."

Gotham kicks off with the murders of Thomas and Martha Wayne; an event that alters the life of young Bruce Wayne (David Mazouz) forever and causes him to cross paths with Detective James Gordon (Ben McKenzie). It also serves as the impetus for all that follows as Gordon fights to save the soul of Gotham, while coping with a wide array of characters who are fated to inhabit Batman's rogue's gallery and colourful extended cast... ➤

GOTHAM REVEALS A WHOLE NEW TAKE ON THE WORLD OF DC'S DARK KNIGHT – A CITY WITHOUT BATMAN, LOST IN THE GRIP OF ORGANISED CRIME. EXECUTIVE PRODUCER **BRUNO HELLER** EXCLUSIVELY TALKS US THROUGH ONE OF COMICS' MOST ICONIC SUPPORTING CASTS AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN THEM BEFORE...

➤ Detective James Gordon

BEN MCKENZIE IS THE CITY'S LAST GOOD COP

"He brings real sort of manly weight," says Heller of the actor, who has previously starred in *The OC* and *Southland*, and voiced Bruce Wayne/Batman in the animated feature *Batman: Year One*. "He brings integrity, he brings old-school values; he has backbone. Perhaps in TV more than film that's needed; film, one could argue, is more of an illusion. In TV you have to get people who can embody in a real way the character traits you want to put over strongly. For Gordon, you want that kind of mythic, all-American strength, and Ben does that better than anyone, because he has those kinds of qualities."

"He'll be a different kind of Gordon than we've seen," adds Heller, "to the degree that everyone is different when they're younger, and it's very much about the journey. The fact that people know the older Gordon very well and have seen him portrayed by great actors like Gary Oldman is a very particular challenge when you're creating a younger version of people like that. On the one hand it's obviously informed by other portrayals, but you have to own the character in a different way. Otherwise, there's no journey, and the fun of that, when you have that kind of strange foreshadowing, is how do you get from A-Z? It shouldn't be, with any of these characters, a slavish imitation of the best portrayal of that character, because to a degree that's a sort of mimicry."



Alfred Pennyworth

SEAN PERTWEE IS THE LOYAL RETAINER WITH A HARDER EDGE

Growing up, there is no one closer to Bruce Wayne than the family butler Alfred Pennyworth, who becomes his guardian following the death of Bruce's parents. The character is portrayed by Sean Pertwee, most recently of the US take on Sherlock Holmes, *Elementary*, on which he played Gareth Lestrade.

Offers Heller, "We were so lucky to get Sean for this role. He sort of won it immediately on entry. He has a genuine sense of warmth. When he crosses the police line and walks towards young Bruce, I've seen him 50 or 100 times, and he gets me every time. He gets the audience every time. You need someone who can portray both a difficult, prickly and rough personality, but a caring person, a smart person, a person with very particular values. In this case, the values of a bachelor and a Royal Marine who has spent his life in service of one kind or another. Sean brings such genuine humour and warmth to the role."

Oswald Cobblepot

ROBIN LORD TAYLOR IS THE GENTLEMAN THUG WITH THE HEART OF A MONSTER

Pre-*Gotham*, the Penguin has only been brought to life on screen by Burgess Meredith and Danny DeVito, and those portrayals couldn't be more different. Now, it's Robin Lord Taylor's turn, and this version – focused on his pre-top-hat-and-umbrella days – promises to be just as unique.

"I suspect people will agree with me that if there is any sort of great 'find' in this show, it's Robin Lord Taylor," enthuses Heller.

"He was completely new to me, and his performance is just a revelation. The beauty of it is that it's both a revelation and entirely natural. I hasten to add there are not elements of the psychotic Penguin in Robin Lord Taylor's actual character as a person, but because he's playing someone larger than life who will become the Penguin, the transformation that he has made with that character completely naturally and organically is something he really owns. You sympathise with the character and want him to succeed, but are horrified by him at the same time. It's

just a fabulous portrayal by a really great young actor."

Detective Harvey Bullock

DONAL LOGUE IS THE STREETWISE COP WITH THE DIRTY BADGE

Serving as Gordon's no-nonsense and possibly corrupt partner on the GCPD is Detective Harvey Bullock, portrayed by Donal Logue, whose extensive credits include roles in films such as *Blade*, *Zodiac*, *Ghost Rider* and *Max Payne*, and shows like *Vikings* and *Sons Of Anarchy*.

"Bullock is like an old soldier, a man with an iron heart – actually a golden heart cast in iron, I suppose – and a man of vast experience, street wisdom and hard-bitten values," Heller notes. "Donal looks like he does, but has the mind of a kind of philosopher, and real wisdom. That's what Bullock needs; a sense of cynical wisdom. It's a sort of Humphrey Bogart role, and Donal brings a great natural humour to it and a kind of understanding. He's a detective, but he's not a Sherlock Holmes kind of detective; he's a sort of Popeye Doyle [from *The French*

"Harvey Bullock isn't a Sherlock Holmes kind of detective – he's Humphrey Bogart"
Bruno Heller



Connection] kind of character, so you need someone with that kind of strength, grit and worldly experience.

"The contrast," he continues, "between Bullock and Gordon will be important. They're two sides of the same coin, which is how do you uphold the law? You can uphold the law by literally upholding the law, or you can do so by bending it."

Fish Mooney

JADA PINKETT SMITH IS THE UNDERWORLD QUEEN WITH AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

If anyone has it easier on *Gotham* in one way, it's actress Jada Pinkett Smith, whose character, Fish Mooney, is a crime lord who has been invented for the series, and is therefore completely malleable. Smith has made a name for herself in Hollywood as both as an actress and a producer.

Heller says, "The show needed some ferocious female energy, because there are so many ferocious male characters in this world. What Jada brings is a genuine capacity to convey the ferocity of the character and a great intelligence, because

that's the character's superpower, if you will. A kind of manipulative, cunning, moral woman is what Fish Mooney is. Jada can convey all those complexities in a very visceral way. When these characters are going up against great characters like the Penguin, they have to have great 'pop.' That's something all the actors share; they jump off the screen in a very cinematic way. One of the great fun things about having someone as good as Jada in the role is it gives you such great potential to build the character and create fresh journeys for her."

Selina Kyle

CAMREN BICONDOVA IS THE THIEF WHO KEEPS HER CLAWS SHEATHED

Eartha Kitt, Julie Newmar, Lee Meriwether, Michelle Pfeiffer and Anne Hathaway have preceded Camren Bicondova in the role of Selina Kyle (aka Catwoman), so this young actress has got a lot to live up to. Heller believes she's up to the challenge.

"Selina, along with Bruce, is the youngest of the characters," he explains, "and it's always difficult to find talented people of that age. Camren immediately jumped off

• Opposite: Jada Pinkett Smith stars as underworld queen Fish Mooney.

• Clockwise from top left: Ben McKenzie and Donal Logue team up as Detectives James Gordon and Harvey Bullock; Carol Kane plays the Penguin's mother, Gertrude; Robin Lord Taylor personifies the early days of the Penguin, sans top hat and umbrella; Gordon and Bullock face off with Fish Mooney.

the screen. There was a large casting call for that role, as you can imagine, but she was perfect. She's a dancer, first of all, so has the physicality that you need for the role. Great confidence and all those sort of feline qualities she has in spades, and a certain mystery. She really has an instinctive sense of how to play the role, her first audition tape is pretty much the performance she's giving now: very natural."

The suggestion is that the relationship between Selina and Bruce will be one of the most interesting. "The story hints at that at the beginning," details Heller, "but we really get into it around episode seven."

Edward Nygma

CORY MICHAEL SMITH IS THE LAB GEEK WITH MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS

The role of Edward Nygma, the future Riddler, has gone to relative newcomer Cory Michael Smith, whose take on the character is to very gradually turn him into the man that has previously been played by Frank Gorshin, John Astin and Jim Carrey.

"The Riddler is one of those characters where it's very easy to underestimate or ➤

➤ overplay,” Heller points out. “It’s going to be a slow burn, because he can’t turn into the Riddler yet – I’m not betraying any state secrets on what path Nygma is heading down. We’re going to reveal slowly the complex and delicious depths of that character. With Cory Michael Smith we have someone who has a number of hidden depths that we’re going to use. He’s a brilliant, versatile, strong leading-man actor, who’s playing this wonderful slow-burn character. That’s going to be fun, to reveal all of his levels there.”

In a quick aside, Heller notes the different actors who have played the character in the past, and locks on to Frank Gorshin’s interpretation from the Sixties *Batman* TV series. “One of the challenges of doing

“The young prince,” he smiles. “David is the best young actor I’ve ever worked with. It’s very rare to get profound acting out of young actors, frankly. The stuff that I’ve seen David do, he embraces all of the other actors on the set with his focus and ability to kind of plumb depths of emotion. It’s really uncanny; he’s a really smart and deep kid with a great deal of talent. I can’t say enough about him.

“Here’s the thing,” he continues. “Normally when you’re casting a role for a kid, you have to be a little defensive in the writing before you’ve cast the kid. You can never tell whether you’re going to get someone magical, like Jodie Foster at that age, or something perfectly fine, but not really what you would want. The thing

Wayne's World

Inside the troubled mind of David Mazouz's future Dark Knight

A lifelong Batman fan, he views the day he found out he had won the part as one of the greatest of his life. At the age of 13, Mazouz is probably best known for the role of Jake Bohm in *Heroes* creator Tim Kring’s *Touch*, in which he co-starred with Kiefer Sutherland. Coupled with guest-starring roles in television series like *Mike & Molly*, *Private Practice* and *The Office*, his star is very much on the ascendancy...

What was the audition process like?

I went in for the initial audition and met with Bruno Heller. Then they wanted me to come back and test, and I tested about four times, I think. I had to test for a lot of people – first for Warner Bros, then Fox and so on. And of course, after every test my agent would say, “You should know by tomorrow whether they want you or not,” and of course, there was another test after that [laughs]. On the last one they gave me a major haircut, gelled by hair back and made me look a lot more Bruce Wayne-y. They told me what clothes to wear, and finally when I found out I got the part... actually, my mom found out first. My agents had called her, and that day my mom found out was my sister’s birthday, and I got in trouble at school, so my mum didn’t want to tell me. She waited until the next day, and she told me in a public place, but I still screamed as loud as I could, because it was one of the best moments of my life.

What do you think they were looking for in the audition?

They gave me the same lines for every audition. They sounded very serious and Bruce Wayne-y. They were a boy talking to some father-like figure; kind of like a therapist in a way. The lines were really serious and dark, and that’s what I brought to it. Apparently, Bruno really loved what I had to offer. I took my own approach. I knew I was auditioning for Bruce Wayne, but I hadn’t gotten the pilot script until I booked it, but I knew it was going to be some time around the time his parents get killed, which does happen in the pilot. I knew he would be a dark and sad sort of kid. So I didn’t really ask myself what they were looking for, but more, “What do I have to offer?” That’s the thing I like to do; I like to do dark stuff.

You’ve used the phrase ‘Bruce Wayne-y’ a couple of times. What does that mean to you?

As to looks, very preppy. When I mentioned the hair, my hair is super curly and afro-like, and they cut it off for the show. Every day when I work, I have to come in about 45 minutes earlier than I should have to come in because they have to do my hair; they have to flat-iron it, and blow dry it and put gel in it and that kind of stuff. And with the clothes, they put me in these preppy clothes – I’m always wearing a Brooks brothers button-down shirt with a jacket, and that’s casual for Bruce. We were shooting the pilot, and the wardrobe ladies gave me a button-down shirt and a sweater to wear, and [director] Danny Cannon sees me and says, “No, no, no, no. Bruce Wayne would never wear this. This is like wearing shorts and a T-shirt!” I was literally wearing a tie, a Brooks Brothers shirt and a sweater.

In terms of acting Bruce Wayne-y, I would say at least for the first couple of episodes, I think it’s just a matter of darkness and anger and seriousness. He’s also compulsive, he’s searching for any meaning to his parents’ death – in episode five you’ll see his obsession. He hasn’t gone through a total evolution in the first half of the season, which is what we’ve shot so far, but you’ll see some changes in



Batman is that Frank Gorshin’s version of the Riddler is not really a good guide for a modern portrayal of the Riddler. You have to take a fresh approach.”

Bruce Wayne

DAVID MAZOUZ IS THE ORPHANED HEIR ON A DARK PATH

The stand-out during casting – and perhaps the biggest surprise – was David Mazouz, seen most recently in Tim Kring’s *Touch*. Heller says that the young actor’s performance is so strong that Bruce Wayne’s presence on the show was greatly increased from what was originally intended.

about *Gotham* is that this is not a kid’s show. This is an adult show; this is an adult portrayal of a child. It’s for kids as well, but it’s a young adult version, if you like, so until you know whether he can really deal with adult themes, and I don’t mean talking about them, but being able to understand them so he can act them, you just can’t be sure. David was on board. His audition tape had a scene written to test the style, and once you have a great actor in that role, you can write to it. This means the role can expand in all kinds of interesting ways.”

Gotham is airing now on Mondays at 9pm on Channel 5, and will be available on Netflix immediately afterwards.



"Bruce Wayne turns his tragic loss into a need to seek vengeance"

David Mayouz

his character. *That's* what I'm referring to when I say I'm acting Bruce Wayne-y.

Were you a Batman kid?

Batman's always been my favourite. First of all, he's the coolest and he's every kid's dream. Clark Kent and Superman is a little more clean-cut, goody-two-shoes. Batman always has a darker side, a more interesting and serious side. Batman was also always my favourite because he wasn't born with any superpowers. Clark Kent and a lot of the other DC heroes and all of the other heroes in general always have some sort of thing they're born with. Batman finds it within himself. He turns his tragic loss into a need to seek vengeance, and to go out in the world and save Gotham.

And in *Gotham* we're seeing the early stages of that?

You will see little hints of that. They had a line in the pilot that's not there anymore where I was talking to Gordon and I said to him, "If you don't find this guy, then we'll have to do it my way." That was an awesome line, but they cut it out. There are lines like that. You'll see little hints of him starting his journey to becoming the Caped Crusader throughout the show.

What's the difference in the relationship between Bruce and Gordon and Bruce and Alfred?

Since Alfred is his guardian, he's also Bruce's friend. I have most of my scenes with Alfred. They're a lot more comfortable with each other than Bruce is with Gordon. Bruce has a deep respect for Gordon, because as soon as they meet each other he finds out that Gordon also lost his dad very young and was also slain right before his eyes. When he hears that he develops, like I said, a respect for him. It's not as warm a relationship; more acquaintances than friends. They are friends, they do work together, but it's not as comfortable a relationship as he has with Alfred.

For you, what's the excitement about playing Bruce in the pre-Batman days?

It's all psychological. How did that first come to be? The Penguin, for example. You'll see his origin story quite a bit in this. You don't really see in other stuff why he's wearing a top hat and why he always has the umbrella with him. It'll answer all of these questions that people – including me – have been asking. I've always wondered about that, and this will give answers.

Bruno has said that we probably wouldn't see you in the Batman costume until the last scene of the final episode...

I have no problem with that. When I signed up for this show, I knew I wasn't auditioning for Batman, that I was auditioning for Bruce Wayne. I've seen the light and I've seen the interest of playing Bruce Wayne as opposed to Batman, and I've come to terms with it.



THE ONCOMING STORM

THERE'S A NEW DOCTOR IN THE TARDIS, AND A NEW TONE TO THE SERIES. SCIFINOW HEADS BEHIND THE BLUE DOORS ON THE SHOW'S CARDIFF SET TO FIND OUT WHY IT'S ALL CHANGE ON DOCTOR WHO...

Peter Capaldi's presence promises a new start for *Doctor Who*.



WE KNOW THE TARDIS. WE KNOW WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE, WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE AND WHAT IT FEELS LIKE. SO, STANDING NEXT TO THE CONSOLE, LOOKING

around at the gallery, the time rotor and array of LEDs, there's no mistaking where we are, and yet there's definitely something different; something new.

We're on set for Series Eight of *Doctor Who*, and as ever, we've arrived at BBC Cardiff brimming with theories and queries, determined to get past the show's fearsome wall of secrecy. As we scan the interior of the TARDIS for any possible clues about the tone of the show and, perhaps more importantly, Peter Capaldi's Doctor, clocking the obviously important new additions like the overflowing bookcases and chalk-covered blackboards, while also fiendishly scribbling illegible notes that are almost certainly meaningless ('Lots

of LEDs', 'Diagrams', 'Small wooden toy horse on wheels'), executive producer Brian Minchin seems to share our excitement. "It is entirely different. It seems entirely new, but that's the joy of *Doctor Who*," he teases. "His character's starting again."

The regeneration is always an exciting time, and it's one of the many elements, brimming with mystery and possibility, that makes *Doctor Who* unique. The announcement that Capaldi would be taking the role of everyone's favourite Time Lord ended months of speculation that saw bookies laying odds on everyone from Helen Mirren to Dominic Cooper.

"It was always Peter for us. We knew the type of Doctor we wanted and where we wanted to go with it," says Minchin. "We only met Peter. I'm not sure he knew about that! He was the only one. You want



a Doctor who is unpredictable and has a bit of danger to him. We've had lots of brilliant, brilliant Doctors who you always felt very safe with, but with Peter's Doctor you're never quite sure which way he's going to turn. It's really hard; because he's got to be really funny, be an action hero, be a mystery, have some edge to him. We only had eyes for Peter."

The question, then, is exactly how different and dangerous he is going to be. On set for last-minute changes to the dialogue rather than filming (Jenna Coleman, meanwhile, is on a green-screen stage tangling with a tunnel-bound monster that pulls a stuntman towards the ceiling), Capaldi seems relaxed, clad in T-shirt and jeans, but there's no mistaking the presence of the man who put the wind up world leaders in the BBC's *The Thick Of It*. "I used to do voiceovers. I did a voiceover for

©BBC

DOCTORING THE TARDIS

PRODUCTION DESIGNER MICHAEL PICKWOOD ON THE EVER-CHANGING WORLD OF DOCTOR WHO

Does it feel like a new start on *Doctor Who*?

Even with the same Doctor, no two series are quite the same. Nothing is ever quite the same with *Doctor Who*, so yes, it's a slight difference. There's a different attitude maybe to the performance of the Doctor, the nature of the stories. It's still just as weird and wonderful.

Is it exciting to get back to a full series after the specials?

Well yes, it was hardly a year off, but it was quite a relief to tell one story at a time. But this series is pretty big, actually. It's been quite an adventure in its own way, the scope and the scale has been very large. I have to say, I've never had to be so continuously imaginative in all my life! It is wonderful and exhausting! One episode of *Doctor Who* is like making three different films, all wrapped in at the same time. I think there are probably as many sets in 45 minutes as Ridley Scott has in three hours.

How does the new TARDIS reflect the new Doctor?

There are additions to it; things have changed. Around the gallery we've put the bookcases up there, because he's got an older view of life, shall we say, this Doctor. There's a slightly, not so much darker, but grumpier Doctor, and lots of blackboards have come in, the sort of Einstein touch, the could-be professor. They're also old-fashioned and traditional at the same time; they're sort of high-tech antique.

Was there anything you were particularly keen to add to it?

It was fun to design something that looked scientific, elegant yet organic. Organic yet high-tech is what Steven [Moffat] was after, something that looked like it could fly. He wanted less whimsy, yet at the same time to be equally wonderful. I was keen for it to look like if you were a child you would be terrified... you'd want to fly, but be frightened of touching anything. There'd be a sense of awe, it's got a slight cathedral-sense feel to it. I was keen that it have a sense of precision about it, that you could believe, even if it's all mythical, you could believe that it might work. So to keep the allegory of science and time and everything else wrapped up in it; to be quite fun and entertaining.

➤ butter, and they said to me, 'Could you be a little less sinister?' he laughs. "So that's how far it's come. I've gone from amiable geek in Bill Forsyth films to sinister butter salesman!"

WHILE HE'S CLEARLY NOT GOING TO BRING THE THICK OF IT LEVELS OF PROFANITY TO THE DOCTOR, THE FACT IS THAT HE'S KNOWN FOR PLAYING DARKER

roles. Seeing the video of him explaining the Doctor's transformation to an adorable tiny fan was heartwarming, but it did shine a light on the fact that young viewers will have to get used to this new man.

"The constituency of the audience needs to be reassured that it's fine," he tells us.

"Whether it is fine or not, I'm not sure. The Doctor is as he has always been, and he is also totally different. That's the great thing about *Doctor Who*; it carries its past with it all the time, so he brings the past with him, even if he's different. I think if people think he's different, they're really meaning in contrast to Matt [Smith] and David [Tennant], who were both very amiable. He's probably not as user-friendly as they are. But he's still unmistakably *Doctor Who*."

The word 'friendly' comes up again and again during our time on set. There's no denying the matey relationship that David Tennant and Matt Smith had with their companions, right up to Coleman's Clara

Oswald, who watched her friend change faces right in front of her eyes.

"It immediately affects her in a very profound way," Coleman tells us. "It throws the whole dynamic up in the air, and hopefully switches and changes it. She soon realises how much of a livewire this new guy is. She was feeling quite safe and secure, and really having a good time travelling with the Doctor, kind of falling in love with him, knowing where she stood, and then this new guy pops up, who's a bit of an adrenaline junkie, who doesn't do what he's told, who would leave her in the lurch a bit more. So it has changed things, and I think she very quickly realises that it's very hard to keep this guy under control."

"HE'S A LOT FIERCER, BOLDER, DARKER, BUT HE'S GOT THIS CURIOSITY – THIS MAD CURIOSITY"
JENNA COLEMAN



ALL THE STRANGE, STRANGE CREATURES

WE'D RATHER THESE MONSTERS TAKE A SEAT OUTSIDE SERIES EIGHT

THE WEEPING ANGELS

When the Weeping Angels first appeared in 'Blink,' they were terrifying and unforgettable. Subsequent episodes fleshed out their mythology, but they're simply not as pant-wettingly scary as they once were. Give them a break.

THE DALEKS

While we all love an iconic villain, there's only so many times that they can be defeated before they lose some of their cold, metallic shine. Of course, we retain the right to retract this in the event of a brilliant reinvention.

THE CYBERMEN

We don't want to sound like we're railing against classic *Who* villains, but the last few attempts to bring back the Cybermen have been disappointing. Until they can actually be made scary again, put them back on ice.

WHEDON VILLAIN CLONES

We've seen a few too many villains that look like they were conceived after watching the classic *Buffy* episode 'Hush.' The Whisper Men and The Silence were effective enough, but acted as shadowy ciphers rather than being interesting in their own right.

THE SLITHEEN

Just to be clear, we don't think there's actually any chance of Russell T Davies' wind-afflicted masters of disguise making a return, but we'd like to go on the record as saying that we'd rather they didn't.

WE'RE ALWAYS HAPPY TO SEE...

THE OOD

"It's an Ood! Oods are good. Love an Ood. Hello, Ood!"

Words like 'livewire' might not come as too much of a surprise to those who remember the glee with which Smith and Tennant's Doctors leapt into action, crying "Geronimo!" or "Allons-y!" but Coleman explains that Capaldi's Doctor is driven rather than excitable.

"Matt's Doctor was a lot more human-friendly, whereas the new Doctor is unapologetic and a lot less patient," she explains. "He'll get the same job done, but he won't beat around the bush at all; he's straight to the point, he's direct, he hasn't got the patience of a human. He's a lot fiercer, bolder, darker, but he's got this curiosity, this mad curiosity... He'll keep pushing the line further and further into

danger to try and satisfy his curiosity, to try and find things out."

It's not just Clara who's trying to get a fix on who this new man is. As we've seen in the frustratingly brief teaser trailers, the Doctor's not exactly sure who he is either. "Clara, be my pal," he intones. "Tell me, am I a good man?" "For Clara that's really difficult, because with Matt's Doctor, she was always quite safe with him," Coleman tells us. "She knows that he would catch her, whereas this guy, she isn't quite sure if he will or not, and he doesn't quite know himself yet either. He's trying to find out what kind of Doctor he is, if he is a good man or who he is now, and that's a discovery for him as well." ➤

"DOCTOR WHO IS PART OF MY UPBRINGING IN THE SIXTIES WITH THE BEATLES, SCHOOL MILK AND BRONCHITIS"
PETER CAPALDI



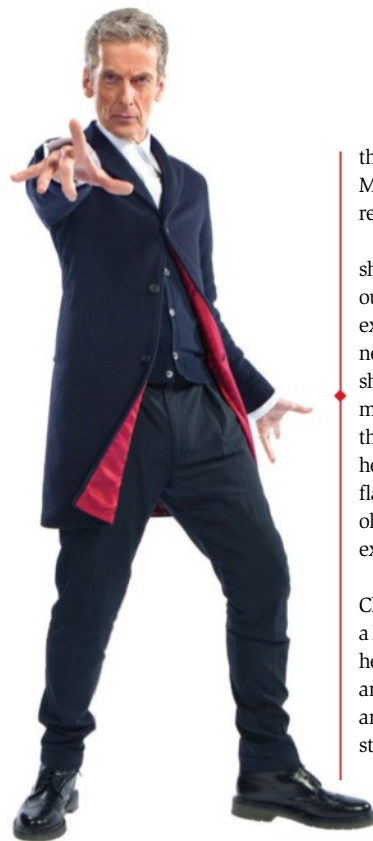
➤ Capaldi might be playing a man in transition, but he isn't entirely unsympathetic to Clara's plight. Interestingly, given that changing is an essential part of who the Doctor is, he tells us that it's his refusal to alter this new personality for her that makes him a struggle to get a handle on. "I think she finds it very difficult to deal with him," he explains. "He doesn't really do much to change himself in order to make himself palatable for her, so she struggles a great deal to understand him and find a way to like him. He's not a walk in the park."

This potential for a combative relationship between the Doctor and his companion that goes beyond "Do this!" "No!" is one of the most exciting elements

of this new season. Amy Pond was at her strongest when she was challenging the Doctor to justify his actions, while one of the reasons that Donna Noble is so fondly remembered is that she called the Time Lord on his bullshit. We've already seen Clara at her most gung-ho, going against the Doctor's wishes to save the day while he looked on only half-disapprovingly.

NOW, NOT ONLY ARE WE GOING TO SEE A LESS FLIRTATIOUS RELATIONSHIP ("IT'S NOT ROMANTIC, BUT IT'S NOT WITHOUT LOVE," CAPALDI TELLS US), WE'RE GOING to see the companion opposite a Doctor who is going to match her push for shove. "The best thing to do with a control-freak character like Clara is overload her with

"THE BEST THING TO WITH A CONTROL-FREAK LIKE CLARA IS TO OVERLOAD HER WITH THINGS SHE CAN'T POSSIBLY CONTROL!"
BRIAN MINCHIN



things she can't possibly control!" laughs Minchin. "I think it's kind of like the relationship between best friends."

Clara is desperate for control, because she is fully committed to having a life outside of the TARDIS while continuing to explore time and space. Unlike Rose, who never wanted to get off, and Amy, who said she was leaving before coming back so many times that we just assumed she was there, Clara has a very clear plan to split her life evenly between the real world – her flat in Shoreditch and job at that classic old *Who* callback, Coal Hill School – and exploring the universe.

"In the same way we had Victorian Clara leading a double life, this Clara has a life of home, school, her domestic life, her domestic bliss, her flat in Shoreditch, and then the Doctor will bring the TARDIS and land in the bedroom or land in the stationary cupboard at school, and then she'll go off on her adventures," Coleman tells us. "But she's very strict about him returning her at exactly the right time



With a new Doctor comes a new dynamic with companion Clara (Jenna Coleman).

so she doesn't miss anything on Earth. So in a way she is kind of having her cake and eating it, but what she really doesn't want is the double life to collide in any way. It has to be completely separate, and that is the control freak Clara coming through."

With a new storyline and a new Doctor, we have to wonder if it feels like she's working on the same show. "No, it doesn't," she tells us, "because there were so many changes with Clara as well. Obviously, we have Ben Wheatley directing the first two episodes, so the format of the show feels different. We're doing these longer scenes now, and the tone is very, very different. I've seen the first few episodes, and it's amazing how it's still *Doctor Who*, but it is very much a new show in terms of the tone and the feel – everything, really. Peter's energy is very different, and his Doctor is very different. He's been really brave and really bold with what he wanted to do with it."

The announcement that a filmmaker as talented and revered as Wheatley would be directing the first two episodes of the series

was certainly a welcome surprise, and Coleman tells us that the director of *Kill List* and *Sightseers* set the tone for the upcoming series. "Oh, he is so cool," she enthuses. "He's one of those people that loves the show, so they want to work on it and just really enjoy it, so he brings this really good energy to the set. On *Doctor Who* it's exactly what you want. He's kind of brought a new feel to it as well; it is a lot darker and fiercer, and it's kind of a very different tone."

A new direction for the show seems like a healthy move after much of the last year was spent celebrating its history. Following the 50th Anniversary special 'The Day Of The Doctor' and the Christmas Special/Matt Smith farewell 'The Time Of The Doctor' (which were either terrific or terrible, depending on who you talk to), *Doctor Who*'s eighth season feels like an opportunity for a clean break. Big events are fun, but one of the most exciting things about *Doctor Who*'s return is that we'll have a proper series run. Saturday evenings will be booked off again. ➤



One new cast member is *The Green Wing*'s Michelle Gomez.

The teaser trailers have indicated a darker direction for Capaldi's Doctor.



At SciFiNow, we have a strong belief that we shouldn't see anything until the people who have made it want us to see it, which is why you'll never see a pap shot in our mag or on our website.

DR. WHO

VERSUS THE PAPARAZZI 63p

K-9 SAVES TOT FROM PLUNGE



SCRIPTS LEAKED

THE FIRST FIVE SCRIPTS BEING LEAKED UNDER TWO MONTHS BEFORE AIRING IS A BIG PROBLEM

River Song had warned of "Spoilers..." so often that you'd have thought we'd all be on message at this point. However, in the latest of a long-running series of security plumbing issues, five of the scripts for Series Eight have been leaked. In a statement to the *Radio Times*, the BBC apologised for the leak and begged fans who'd read the scripts to keep the details to themselves.

Here are some of the show's recent brushes with the spoiler-hungry, and just how serious they really were...

FINALE SHIPPED

The final episode of Series 7 was sent to US customers on Blu-ray... before it aired.



NEW DOCTOR NAMED

The Peter Capaldi announcement was moved forward when word of his appointment was leaked.

PAP PHOTOS

It seems like some people can't get enough of hastily snapped pics of the Time Lord. Irritating but unavoidable.



➤ As ever though, *Doctor Who*'s new directions are rooted in the show's past. From the moment that Capaldi gripped his lapels in a William Hartnell-esque manner at the announcement reveal, we've been trying to identify possible inspirations for his performance. The jacket suggests Pertwee, but how much can we read into a jacket? Tennant pointed out how much he loved Peter Davison's Doctor, while Smith always used to cite Patrick Troughton as an inspiration with every worry of his hands. When we ask Capaldi if there was one Doctor in particular he's been using as a reference point, his answer comes quickly and firmly.

"No. No, seriously, because *Doctor Who* started when I was four. So *Doctor Who* is part of my upbringing in the Sixties with the Beatles, Sunday Night At The London Palladium, school milk and bronchitis, all



of these things. It's part of me. So all of those Doctors, all of them, really... I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for every single previous Doctor that there's been, so I just sort of stand on their shoulders. It's due to each and every one of their individual talent and charisma and gifts that the show's still here. So I don't have a specific Doctor that I look to, but I look to them all, and I do look to them all."

"That's the beauty of the show, and I think that's why it's lasted so long: you can reinvent, and it's kind of what the show is, and it needs to change and keep on moving forward," enthuses Coleman. "It's going to be really, really interesting to see what people think. I've absolutely loved watching what Peter has been doing with it and seeing how over the episodes together it's growing and really come into its own. For me, he is very much... he's the Doctor, and

I think from day one you see he's got such a clear handle on it."

"*Doctor Who* has within it some of the cornerstones of the human psyche," asserts Capaldi. "The desire to be able to leave when the going gets rough, he always just disappears, he can just walk away from everything – and also that he dies and is reborn. It's a show that young people and children can watch in which they are confronted with death, but in a way that is not grief-stricken. I think it is like a fairy tale. Although it's a sci-fi show, to me there's an aspect of Grimm's fairy tales about it where the Doctor takes you deep into the forest where there are monsters, but will return you to safety at the end."

Let the adventures begin. ✍

Doctor Who returns on 23 August to BBC One and BBC America.

We eagerly await the time when this Doctor shows his true colours.



"HE'S GOT TO BE REALLY FUNNY, BE AN ACTION HERO, BE A MYSTERY, HAVE SOME EDGE TO HIM – WE ONLY HAD EYES FOR PETER CAPALDI"
BRIAN MINCHIN

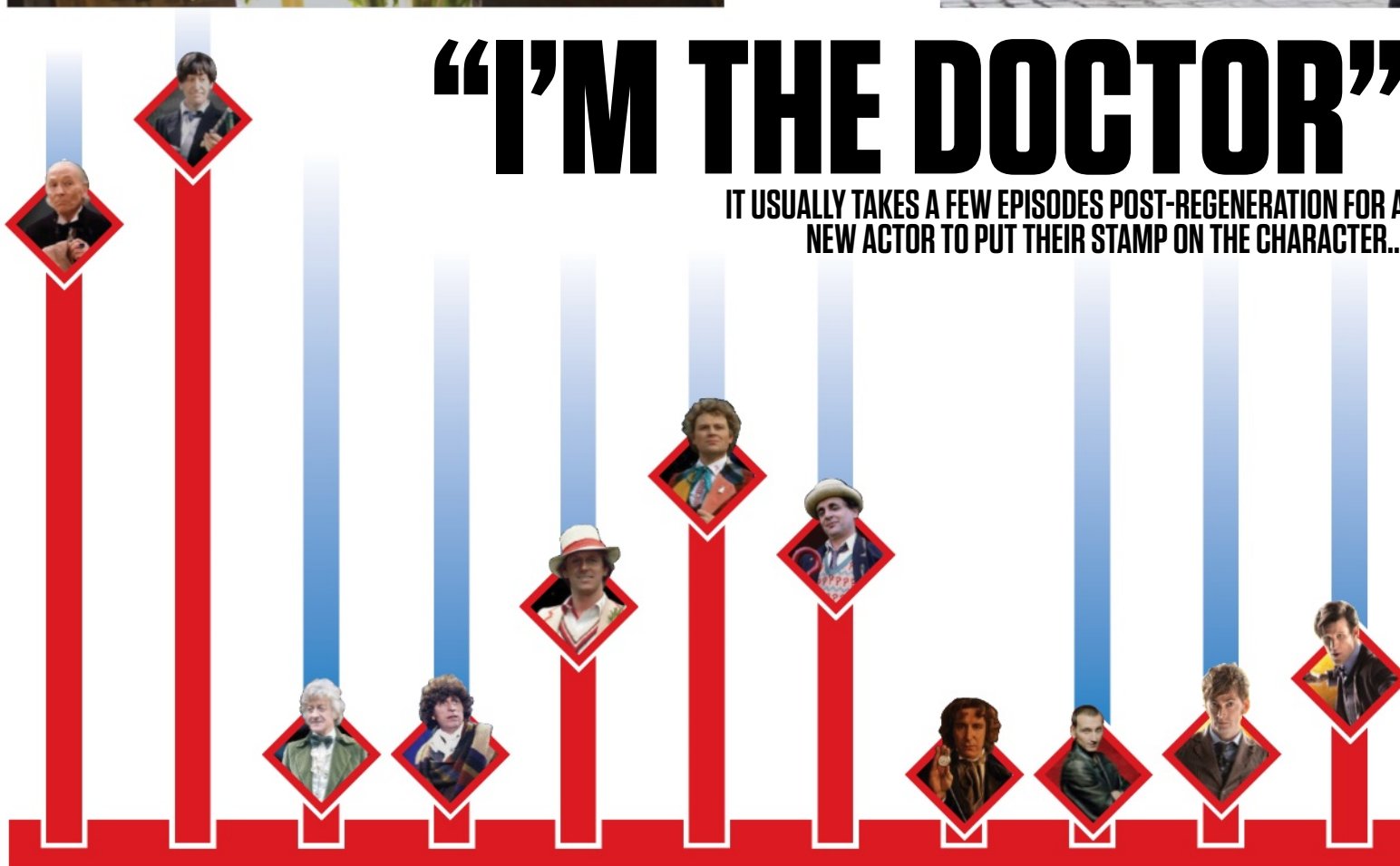
Vastra (Neve McIntosh) is a confirmed familiar face for Series Eight.



A return for old adversaries the Cybermen looks likely.

"I'M THE DOCTOR"

IT USUALLY TAKES A FEW EPISODES POST-REGENERATION FOR A NEW ACTOR TO PUT THEIR STAMP ON THE CHARACTER...



WILLIAM HARTNELL
27 ep./139 ep.

The Aztecs
By the sixth *Doctor Who* story, Hartnell was in his element. The harder edges of his angry grandad had softened a bit, and he'd started showcasing his sense of humour a bit more.

PATRICK TROUGHTON
32 ep./119 ep.

The Tomb Of The Cybermen
With so many of his stories missing, it's hard to know when Troughton hit his stride. He's firing on all cylinders here though: scatter-brained but razor-sharp, witty but heartfelt.

JON PERTWEE
5 ep./128 ep.

Doctor Who And The Silurians
Pertwee hits the ground running, but his reaction to the Brigadier destroying the Silurian base set the tone: quick to anger, impatient, and environmentally aware.

TOM BAKER
5 ep./172 ep.

The Ark In Space
Baker's Fourth Doctor was a wonderfully impulsive creation, gleeful at the prospect of certain death, and his curiosity at the discovery of Wirm is textbook Fourth Doctor.

PETER DAVISON
9 ep./69 ep.

Kinda
Baker was hard to follow, but Davison settled into his teacher-on-a-school-trip take on the character by 'Kinda'. The story received a mixed reception at the time, but is now acknowledged as one of his best.

COLIN BAKER
18 ep./31 ep.

The Trial Of A Time Lord
It's hard to pick a point where Baker found his stride, as he never really got the chance. His final batch of stories, 'The Trial Of A Time Lord', allowed him to be outraged rather than inconsistent.

SYLVESTER MCCOY
15 ep./42 ep.

Remembrance Of The Daleks
McCoy's Doctor took a while to find his character, but he's on great form in the first episode of his second series; less of a bumbling clown and more of a sharp-witted strategist.

PAUL MCGANN
1 ep./1 ep.

The Movie
Despite having to suffer through the obligatory "Who am I?" scream, McGann's Eighth Doctor is glorious in his speech about a warm Gallifreyan night before exclaiming that his shoes fit perfectly.

CHRISTOPHER ECCLESTON
1 ep./13 ep.

Rose
Without having the burden of immediately following another actor, Eccleston successfully nails his Doctor on the first try: decisive and impulsive, but not above a quick one-liner.

DAVID TENNANT
5 ep./47 ep.

The Girl In The Fireplace
While friendlier, 'The Girl In The Fireplace' has all the Tenth Doctor tropes: telling people to be scared, saying sorry, glorying in how brilliant things are, and being a right flirt.

MATT SMITH
8 ep./44 ep.

The Hungry Earth
'The Hungry Earth'/'Cold Blood' two-parter finds Smith urging humanity to be better than they are rather than fixing their problems for them.

The Best of Timewarp

FROM CORNETTOS TO BUSTING GHOSTS, TAKE A LOOK BACK AT THE RETRO CLASSICS

148 Batman: The Movie

154 Ghostbusters

158 2001: Space Odyssey

166 Shaun of the Dead

170 Gremlins

**“DO YOU WANT ANYTHING
FROM THE SHOP?”
“CORNETTO?”**

166



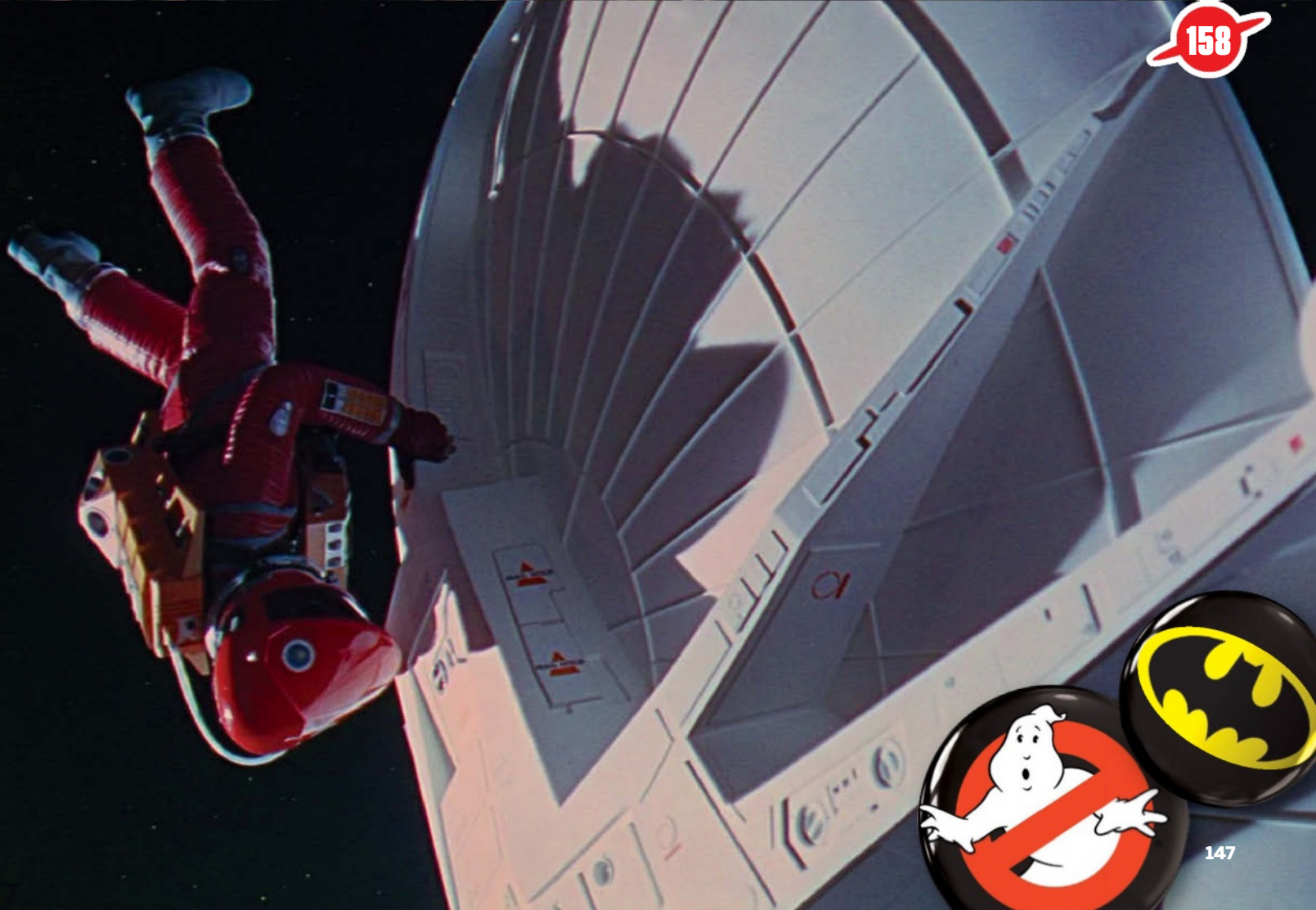
148

170





154
158



BATMAN

IT WASN'T THAT NOBODY BELIEVED A BATMAN MOVIE COULD BE DONE WITHOUT BEING CAMP; MORE THAT THEY DIDN'T THINK A SUPERHERO MOVIE COULD BE DONE WITHOUT BEING CAMP. STARS MICHAEL KEATON AND JACK NICHOLSON, DIRECTOR TIM BURTON AND OTHERS RECALL THE TRIALS, TRIBULATIONS AND THE ORIGIN STORY BEHIND THE FIRST MODERN SUPERHERO FILM...

Fandom fairly exploded when Ben Affleck was announced as Batman/Bruce Wayne in 2016's follow-up to *Man Of Steel*. But that response was relatively sedate compared to the one greeting the news that actor Michael Keaton – Mr Mom himself – had been cast in the role for Tim Burton's 1989 version. And that news, in turn, was nothing compared to what would have happened if producers Jon Peters and Peter Guber's original plans had been brought to fruition.

"There was only one other actor that we really wanted, which was Bill Murray," explains Peters, who paused to let that one sink in for a minute. "At one point we played with the idea of Bill Murray and Eddie Murphy playing Batman and Robin. Peter and I had done a lot of movies, and many began in concept as party jokes. Batman was always something that we really wanted to do, and we worked on it for a long time. The idea of Bill Murray set the tone for the movie in the sense that we wanted someone who had a comedic sensibility, but also had a dark side and an explosive side, which most comics do, especially Bill Murray. Not until we saw *Beetlejuice* did we realise that this guy who played Mr Mom had a ferocious side and was completely, unbelievably explosive. That's when we started zeroing in. There was a mention of all kinds of other actors to play Batman, and every agent in Hollywood would call us, but Peter and I hung in there until we met with Michael."

Bottom line: they were right. 25 years ago, Batmania swept the world in much the same way it had back in the Sixties with the Adam West-starring television series,

although this wave was decidedly darker, more adult and grittier. It saw Keaton far surpassing expectations in the dual role of Bruce Wayne and Batman; Jack Nicholson owning the part of the Joker (until Heath Ledger came along, of course) and did away with the Sixties stigma that had dogged the character for decades. There wasn't a 'POW!' or 'BLAM!' in sight.

"This is not the TV show," executive producer Michael Uslan proclaimed. "It's completely different, because it is true to the comics. This is the story of Batman, the creature of the night who stalks criminals in the

"MICHAEL KEATON BROUGHT A FRESHNESS TO THE ROLE – IN OTHER WORDS, HE KNEW ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT IT"

TIM BURTON

shadows. This is his first battle with the Joker. It's a wonderful, original, unique and stylish film, and one that will not only thrill [then] 50 years worth of Batman fans, but the general public as well."

At the beginning of the Eighties, Uslan and his partner, Benjamin Melniker, acquired the rights to the character from Warner Bros/DC for what must have been a sweet deal (they have executive-produced every *Batman* film since) and began working with screenwriter Tom Mankiewicz to bring him to life on the big screen. Mankiewicz, of course, was the final writer on Richard Donner's *Superman: The Movie*, and had penned several James Bond films. As such, he seemed like a natural fit, although those efforts never developed beyond the script stage.

"When we did the original screenplay," said Peters,

"we paid Tom Mankiewicz \$750,000 to write the first draft, then about seven drafts later we realised it never really worked. It was like *Superman*; it was derivative. It wasn't original, it wasn't different, it wasn't unique. We'd seen it already. Not until Sam Hamm did this version, which was darker, more extreme and aggressive, and saw Batman as a ferocious fighter, did we start to understand the direction we wanted the film to go in."

Leading them down that path was the success of Frank Miller's seminal comic-book miniseries of the time, *The Dark Knight Returns*, which returned the

character to his roots in a way that was shocking, yet appropriate.

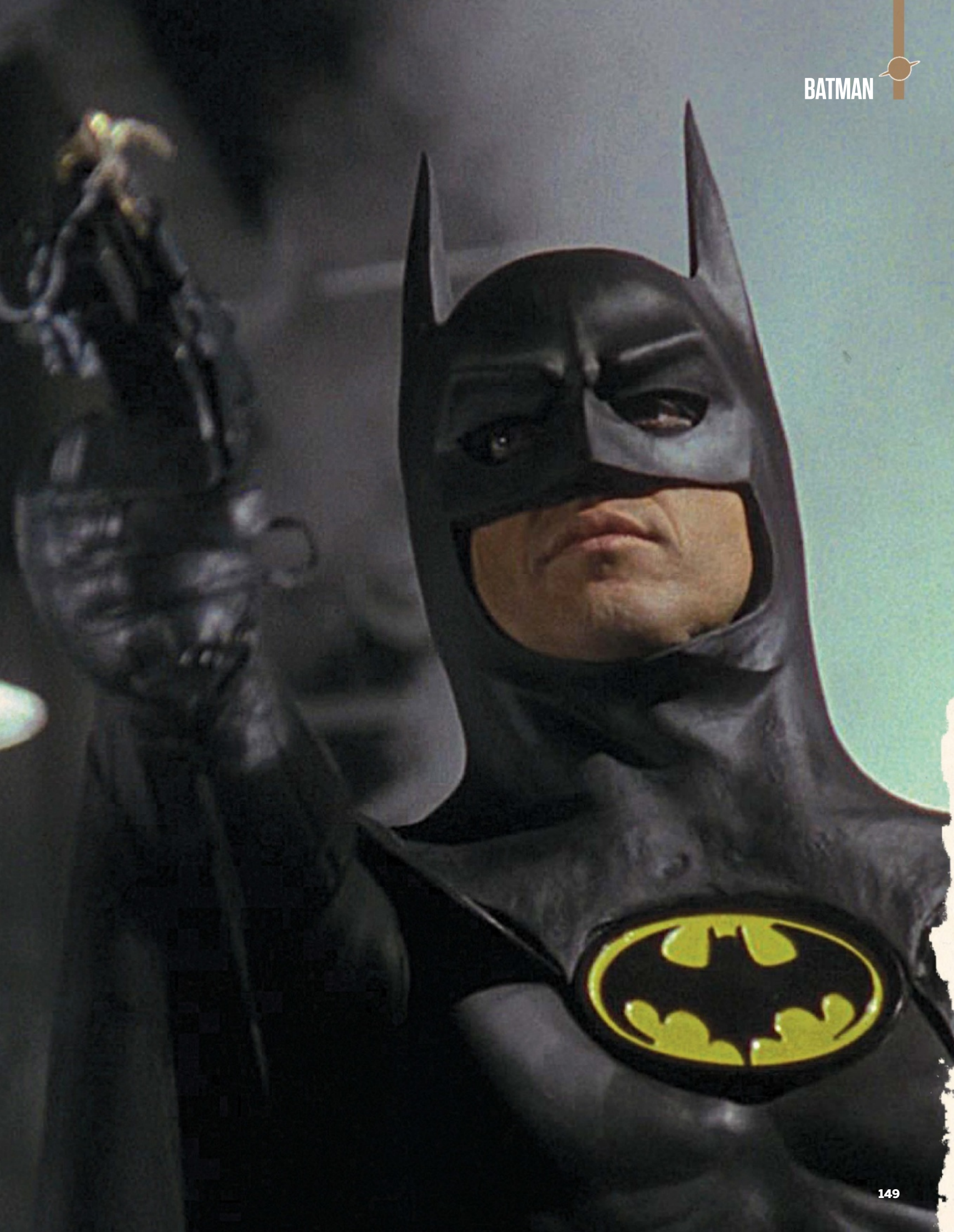
"We started putting this project together brick by brick," explained Melniker, "and here we are. When Tim Burton joined the project, he really started shaping the film to his liking, and I think a fascinating balance has been struck in the final draft. It's a wonderful piece

of work and a wonderful blueprint from which to work."

Added Peters, "The script is like a blueprint, and not until you start to build and shape it do you really understand what you've got. By the time we were finished, the evolution of Batman was complete, as was the uniqueness, design and originality we always wanted to do. How we were going to get there we weren't exactly sure."

Burton was certainly a guiding hand, although he admitted that he had not been a huge fan of the character in the comics.

"The reason I got involved," he said, "not being a giant comic-book fan and growing up more with the series, is that I was attracted to the images. Somehow it just strikes very primal images – Batman, the Joker. The attraction probably also has to do with bats, ➤



➤ which are very primal and great creatures. Any time you show people a bat, something perks up. I think they're very beautifully designed creatures and interesting. It's something that just strikes a very primal chord. I don't even know what that is, but I know that's why I was attracted. There was no other reason I would be. I feel more like a detached, normal person in my approach to the characters, than veering from one side, which is the comic-book, and the other side, which is the TV series."

Prior to being cast in the film, Keaton had worked with Burton on *Beetlejuice*, but had not yet received critical acclaim from his performance in the drama *Clean And Sober*, which is what made his casting so controversial. For his part, he was essentially unfamiliar with the character.

"I do know that even before this movie, there was a kind of a swell of a wave about Batman," Keaton offered. "I'm sure I was probably a year late noticing it. I noticed this Batman thing happening, then Tim [Burton] talks to me about this movie, and while we're doing it, the wave just kept building and building, and then cresting. Beyond that, I wanted to work with Tim again. He can get you to do things on a film. Sometimes, I get ideas where I

want to push things out to their limit, and generally speaking I have an ally in Tim, because he's willing to go further out. I'm not even talking about just for unusual sake, but trying something different, and that makes me comfortable. To put it simply, I'd worked with him on *Beetlejuice* and enjoyed the experience, and wanted to do something with him again, and *Batman* came up."

"Michael," Burton interjected, "brought a freshness to the role. In other words, he knew absolutely nothing about it."

"That's absolutely true," Keaton concurred, "because I chose that way, and also I didn't think I had time to come up with anything. I decided early on, 'I'm not going to start going through comic-books and stuff; I

just don't want to work that way. I want this man to stand on his own.' One thing I did, though, was think I should go right back to the source: bats. So I actually read a little bit about bats for a while. I checked them out and tried to learn about them. Back when Tim told me he wanted me to play the part, I was curious as to what the script was going to be about, so I read it and just read it as a script, as a movie, and just really liked it. I liked the script and the fact that Tim was doing it."

As for creating the dichotomy between Bruce Wayne and Batman, Keaton laughed, "I pretty much guessed. Seriously, what I did was go with the character as written. I said, 'OK, forget he's Batman. Let's say he's a sumo wrestler. Let's say he's a jeweler. Look at what he's about and what he does and says.' I started working from the script and found what I found, which was that this was a very interesting guy to play. Then

you say, 'This is a man who decided to put on a bat suit at night and go out and seek justice.' That made it even more interesting. That really made it very interesting, and I talked about my impression of it with Tim. Tim told me what he was thinking, then I laid down the real basics of what he is and what he isn't, to start with. After that, I was mostly following Tim and going with my instinct."

Pointed out Burton, "The good thing about the script is that Sam Hamm, more than

Michael or myself, is a comic-book fan. So he wrote it very clearly with that in mind. It wasn't like we were all sitting around going, 'What are we going to do with this?' It was clearly delineated and true to the spirit of the character."

The other side of the coin, so to speak, was the casting of the Joker, with Jack Nicholson ultimately being chosen. Explained Peters, "Jack heard about the project for the first time with me in Boston on *The Witches Of Eastwick*. It was about 4am when we were preparing for a church sequence, and he was saying to me, 'I signed on to play the Devil, but I don't want to throw up on all these people, because it will ruin my career.' 'Jack, this is part of the character, you'll be wonderful. And just to get ➤

"WE PLAYED WITH THE IDEA OF BILL MURRAY AND EDDIE MURPHY PLAYING BATMAN AND ROBIN"

JON PETERS



Michael Keaton went against type to great effect as Bruce Wayne.





Tim Burton was the first director to attempt to sincerely replicate the comic-book universe.



BATMAN

THE BAT SUIT

Tim Burton and Michael Keaton on creating the iconic costume

Michael Keaton remembered when he first saw the world of *Batman* come to physical life. "I was amazed by all of these folks over there [in England] who build sets, created special effects, did wardrobe," he said. "I saw the costume and thought, 'Yes!' That was actually a question I had: what would I look like? Then I saw it."

"Tim said, 'I'm thinking of going with armour, because on the television series he just happens to elude bullets; his luck isn't that good,'" Keaton added with a laugh. "Tim said he wanted to do armour, and I asked him to show me. He started to show me sketches – he's visual, so he gets things. And I'm relatively visual, so

"TIM SAID HE WANTED TO DO ARMOUR" I get things, not quite as clearly, but I saw it. Then they did a

bodycast and started going from there, and the end results were pretty amazing."

"A lot of that had to do with Bob Greenwood, because he's the best costume designer," enthused Burton. "The key people – him, production designer Anton Furst, director of photography Roger Pratt – got into one theme, which is that you take a human being and make him something else. You make him Batman. Even though we don't get into the psychology, everybody went with that premise. I mean, he's a guy who dresses up as a bat. What can you say about that?"



Before *The Dark Knight*, Jack Nicholson was the definitive Joker.





Kim Basinger provides the love interest as Vicki Vale.



COPIED CRUSADERS

Which comics had the largest impact on Tim Burton's *Batman*?



THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS

#1-#4 4%

Writer: Frank Miller

Artist: Frank Miller

Published: February-June 1986

Released in the run-up to *Batman*, *The Dark Knight Returns* might have contributed to the title of Burton's sequel, but all it really lent to the first film was a grim tone and a few little nods.

BATMAN: THE KILLING JOKE 18%

Writer: Alan Moore

Artist: Brian Bolland

Published: March 1988

As a character study of the Joker, Moore and Bolland's *The Killing Joke* is incomparable and Tim Burton was said to have carried around a copy of the book on set. Though the circumstances differ, many Joker/Vicki Vale scenes echo those between the Joker and Barbara Gordon.

BATMAN #386 11%

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Tom Mandrake

Published: August 1985

The often overlooked tragedy of Jack Napier's moll Alicia Hunt is obviously cribbed from Black Mask's girlfriend Circe. A vain model who lives in an apartment filled with her own portraits, when Black Mask is disfigured, he scars her with toxic cosmetics - forcing her to don an expressionless white mask.

DETECTIVE COMICS #27 14%

Writer: Bill Finger

Artist: Bob Kane

Published: May 1939

Batman's debut appearance foiling a heist at a chemical factory where a crim falls into a vat of noxious goo gets bundled in with the Joker's origin story for Tim Burton's movie.

DETECTIVE COMICS #439 16%

Writer: Steve Englehart

Artist: Marshall Rogers

Published: March 1971

Cited as a direct inspiration for *Batman*'s opening scene, 'The Night Of The Stalker' puts the dark back in *Dark Knight* by showing him from the perspective of the criminal he's pursuing, all ominous shadows and threatening silence.

DETECTIVE COMICS

#469-#476 37%

Writer: Steve Englehart

Artist: Marshall Rogers

Published: May 1977-April 1978

Steve Englehart was approach to write an early treatment for Tim Burton's *Batman* and the framework of Englehart and Rogers' run is still obvious - love interest Silver St Cloud becomes the earlier love interest Vicki Vale, mobster Boss Thorne becomes Carl Grissom and the newly maniacal Joker with his Joker-fied trail of corpses... well, he stays the same.

This Gotham was authentically grimy and lived in.

"THE DANGER OF A COMIC-BOOK MOVIE IS YOU DON'T WANT TO START SAYING THINGS LIKE, 'I'M AVENGING THE DEATH OF MY PARENTS'" TIM BURTON

➤ your mind off of it, let me tell you about this movie we're doing, *Batman*.' So it began about two years [earlier]." Enthused Uslan, "And Jack Nicholson is ideal as the Joker. It's like God created him for this role."

"You know, with Michael as Batman, we wanted you to care for him as a human being," said Peters. "We wanted you to feel for him. We had another problem with Jack, because we had to be careful not to like him too much. This guy could shoot you and laugh at you, and you love him. We wanted a story that basically had some warmth to it. We were trying to make a real movie, not just a *Lethal Weapon* or something."

Smiled Burton, "For me, there's a certain kind of joy when both Jack and Michael come onto the set knowing their characters, and then it's fun after that. You get a scene five different ways and come up with new things on the spot, but it's always a strong framework we're working in. Both of them know so much, and Jack just knows so much about filmmaking and can take any absurd thing and make it real. That sort of person is a real spark to me."

"But the tricky thing about these characters," he added, "is how you analyse a split personality. Nobody knows. Here, you're dealing with those issues in a comic-book movie, so you're really laden with trouble. So what we tried to do was give it a real short-hand sense of psychology. Be true to the spirit of it and leave it open to interpretation. The danger of a comic-book movie is you don't want to start saying things like, 'I'm avenging the death of my parents' or 'There's a bat in the my window. Now there's an idea.' We tried to avoid that and actually leave things a bit more open,

therefore taking some of the edge off of the conventions of seeing a balloon come out of Michael's mouth saying, 'I'll get you!'"

A major problem that had to be dealt with during production was the sense of propriety fans were trying exert over the project, and the media backlash they were creating in the process. Keaton, for one, said he was unaffected – which was particularly true in those pre-internet days.

"I was never aware of their feeling of propriety, so I was never hurt by it," he said. "Then we went to England to shoot the film, where we didn't have to deal with it, which was a big bonus. It was nice to be there, because when you're away, it's about doing the movie, not all the external things, which turned out to be a blessing. So a lot of this stuff was going on while I was over there, and when I got back I started catching up on it. By that time I just found it pretty amazing and funny. I guess if I'd had a real vested opinion about it one way or the other then that would have been hard, because then I could argue with it. I didn't have to do that because, basically, I had no knowledge."

Peters did, however, and both he and Guber realised that they had to do something to turn around the uninformed opinions. "I didn't intentionally try to think of a way to please the fans, I just figured that I'm a fighter, I had 90 fights as a fighter, I'm an aggressive guy, I'm a rough guy in Hollywood, so to speak" he detailed. "I knew how to make a movie with a guy who could kick ass, and I believed that Michael Keaton could kick ass. So I believed if we made the movie we wanted to make, ultimately people would discover what we discovered."

But I don't think I realised the depth and intensity of the Bat-fanatic all over the country.

"While we were shooting the movie," Peters continued, "the *Wall Street Journal* came out with this article where they absolutely, completely crucified us and did some research about Bat-conventions all over the United States where they were booing the concept of Michael Keaton, and were really feeling that we were bastardising the movie. These were very aggressive people. Peter Guber, Mark Canton [from Warner Bros] and I went into the editing room. We didn't tell Tim or Michael anything. They were making the movie, and if they started to read all this stuff, how were they supposed to make the movie? We had Jack Nicholson, one of America's great actors, playing a guy who smiles all the time. That's a big risk. He could embarrass himself. You've got Michael Keaton in a cape!

"In any event, we cut together a trailer, which became a famous trailer, and we took it back to America. There's was no narrative, no music, no names of who anyone was; just footage from the film. We put it in theatres, and it basically changed the direction of the perception of the movie and really got people on our side."

Pointed out Uslan, "Afterwards, there were a number of major stories in the media done *about* the trailer, and I don't think that had ever happened before in movie history."

For Keaton, the importance of the whole thing hit him when he returned to the US from filming. "The first thing that happened," he said, "when I got off the plane from London is some guy from the airline said, 'Good luck with the movie.' I said, 'It went great,' without knowing what movie he was talking about. Then I realised that the movie was *Batman*. So it was the first thing anybody said to me when I had gotten back, and I quickly realised that something amazing was happening." ☞



Batman is out now on Blu-ray and DVD

ARE YOU TROUBLED BY STRANGE NOISES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT? DO YOU EXPERIENCE FEELINGS OF DREAD IN YOUR BASEMENT OR ATTIC? HAVE YOU OR YOUR FAMILY EVER SEEN A SPOOK, SPECTRE OR GHOST? IF THE ANSWER IS "YES," DON'T WAIT ANOTHER MINUTE. PICK UP THE PHONE AND CALL THE PROFESSIONALS...

GHOSTBUSTERS



Film

RUNNING TIME:

105 minutes

RELEASE DATE:

8 June 1984

DIRECTOR:

Ivan Reitman

WRITERS: Dan Aykroyd, Harold Ramis

CAST: Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Harold Ramis, Sigourney Weaver, Ernie Hudson, Rick Moranis

About

After being fired from their jobs at the university, doctors Peter Venkman, Ray Stantz and Egon Spengler decide to go into business as Ghostbusters. Using their self-designed ghost-trapping equipment, they become media sensations. However, it soon becomes clear that the reason for all their business is due to something big, and it's somehow related to new client Dana Barrett. Can the Ghostbusters beat bureaucracy to save New York from an ancient Sumerian threat and a disaster of biblical proportions? Who ya gonna call?

There are some films that are a power for good. Films that provoke contentment, nostalgia and general good cheer in even the most cynical and cold-hearted of pop-culture sponges. Films that speak of a simpler time, even if it's hard to articulate what was simpler about it. One of these films is *Ghostbusters*.

Attempting to pin down exactly what is so great about *Ghostbusters* is a tricky business. It's a star vehicle that actually makes the most of its whole cast, a summer event movie and a subversive comedy. It's a golden marketing opportunity with a heart as big as Mr Stay Puft, a product of its time and utterly timeless. Every rewatch of *Ghostbusters* creates a warm golden glow and gets belly laughs. It's just brilliant.

If we're discussing specifics, the cast seems as good a place to start as any. As the tragic passing of the great Harold Ramis reminded us, each member of the Ghostbusters is an integral part of a comedy team that has arguably never been matched.

They were a trio of comedians who were at the top of their games with material they'd created for themselves. Bill Murray is full of the bone-dry wit and cutting sarcasm that we know and love, but the Ghostbusters work so well together because they are essentially on level pegging. Their friendship is wonderfully plausible, built on in-jokes, shared history and mutual dependence. Peter Venkman (Murray) may tease Egon Spengler (Ramis) about the time he tried to drill a hole in his head, and there is the sense that the pair of them manipulate Ray Stantz (Dan Aykroyd) into mortgaging the house where

he was born, but without their expertise and support, Peter would have to rely on his unreliable charm. They would not be able to survive in the real world without each other, and we know that they've tried. "You've never been out of college," says Ray. "I've worked in the private sector. They expect results."

Their business venture relies on each of them in equal measure. Venkman is the flash, Ray the heart and Egon the brains, but none of the three are limited to a single trait. Ray's propensity for joy ("Hey! Does this pole still work?") is balanced

"THE TRIO OF VENKMAN, STANTZ AND SPENGLER IS PERFECTLY FORMED"

by his general expertise and surprise put-downs, while Egon's encyclopaedic knowledge is given shades by his dry wit. Witness the way he tips Venkman how much to rip off the hotel manager, or the beautifully deadpan manner with which he emerges from under Janine Melnitz (Annie Potts)'s desk.

Of course, we could never forget Bill Murray – or as GZA greets him in Jim Jarmusch's *Coffee And Cigarettes*, "Bill Groundhog-Day, Ghostbustin'-ass Murray!" While we would argue that Murray doesn't get all the best lines, he certainly gets a lot of them, and nails them to the wall. Venkman is a sceptic who is confronted with a horrifying truth, and understands that there is a profit to be made. He's got the manner of a snake-oil salesman, but has a heart that he might not even know about. His relentless pursuit

of Dana Barrett (beautifully played by Sigourney Weaver) is cringe-inducing, responding to the statement "That's the bedroom, but nothing ever happened in there" with the line, "What a crime..." but when she's possessed by Zuul he resists come-ons such as "Take me now, sub-creature!" The character is the perfect balance of Murray's misanthropy and reluctant heroism. He's also prone to taking hits for the team; it's Venkman who gets slimed ("I feel so funky!"), although in fairness, it's Venkman who manages to avoid getting any of the marshmallow gunk

on him in the finale – it's all about balance.

The trio of Venkman, Stantz and Spengler is so perfectly formed that it's not too surprising that Ernie Hudson has to work hard to make an impression when he appears fairly late into the film as new recruit Winston Zeddemore. He brings a wonderfully grounded quality while managing to gel with the group better than anyone could reasonably expect given how long Murray, Aykroyd and Ramis had worked together.

It's a beautifully cast film all round, with Rick Moranis as the gloriously weedy CPA Louis Tully, Potts as the fantastically sour secretary Janine and William Atherton as the heinously dickless Walter Peck. The world of *Ghostbusters* is familiar, lived-in and plausible, in large part because of the New York it's set in. Given Aykroyd and Murray's status as *Saturday Night Live* ➤



CLASSIC QUOTES

"BACK OFF, MAN. I'M A SCIENTIST"
PETER VENKMAN

"RAY, WHEN
SOMEONE ASKS YOU
IF YOU'RE A GOD,
YOU SAY YES!"
WINSTON ZEDDEMORE

"THAT'S A BIG TWINKIE"
WINSTON ZEDDEMORE

"LET'S SAY THIS TWINKIE REPRESENTS THE NORMAL
AMOUNT OF PSYCHOKINETIC ENERGY IN THE NEW YORK
AREA. BASED ON THIS MORNING'S SAMPLE, IT WOULD BE
A TWINKIE 35-FEET LONG, WEIGHING APPROXIMATELY
600 POUNDS."
EGON SPENGLER

"YOU'RE RIGHT, NO
HUMAN BEING WOULD
STACK BOOKS LIKE THIS"
PETER VENKMAN

"HUMAN SACRIFICE, DOGS
AND CATS LIVING TOGETHER,
MASS HYSTERIA!"
PETER VENKMAN

"LISTEN... DO YOU
SMELL SOMETHING?"
RAY STANTZ

"I COLLECT SPORES, MOLDS
AND FUNGUS"
EGON SPENGLER



Ghostbusters seamlessly combines comedy with a thinly veiled dark side.



➤ veterans, a deep and abiding love for New York City is a given, and the film portrays it as a dirty, chaotic, but ultimately big-hearted place. It's a city that gets behind the Ghostbusters even when they're being thrown in jail, and where three down-on-their-luck guys can get back on their feet, become celebrities and save the world. However, the film gives New York more dark shades than successive family fantasy movies would, and a lot of that has to do with its elements of horror.

Ghostbusters is not a film that talks down to its younger audience. Leaving aside Ray's dream sequence in which a beautiful ghost fellates him while he's dressed in some kind of period military uniform, *Ghostbusters* knows when to go for the scare. Reitman establishes a creepy atmosphere in the library before following it up with the laugh, but once we get into the film's second half and the hounds of

"GHOSTBUSTERS DOESN'T TALK DOWN TO ITS YOUNGER AUDIENCE... IT KNOWS WHEN TO GO FOR THE SCARE"

Gozer the Gozerian are unleashed, there's some pretty dark material.

First, there's the pursuit of Louis, chased from his house party and out into the night by a hound from hell. As he flees across the park, he reaches the window of a fancy restaurant and hammers on the glass, pleading for help. As he falls victim to whatever is chasing him, the diners simply turn back to their meals. The men and women of New York might be ready to rally and cheer on the good guys, but the one per cent will ignore all cries for help, even when it's right in front of them.

More shocking is the attack on Dana. She returns to her empty apartment and sits down in her armchair with the lights off, before noticing a glow from under the door. As she turns to look, three arms burst out of the chair and grab her, keeping her stuck in her seat as it's pulled towards the light and she screams.

This is backed up by Aykroyd's overthinking of the histories and backgrounds of the universes of his films. He was well-known for creating elaborate texts that detailed every element of his movies (he created a back story for the Bluesmobile),

5 OF THE BEST TIE-IN SINGLES

Ray Parker Jr's *Ghostbusters* aside, which tie-ins are the greatest?

DREAM WARRIORS DOKKEN



1 A Nightmare On Elm Street 3 was not only the best Freddy sequel; it also had a fantastic hair metal theme song. "Don't wanna dream no more!"

MEN IN BLACK WILL SMITH



2 Arguably the definitive movie tie-in song of the Nineties, Will Smith was undoubtedly at his peak with *Men In Black*—both the song and the film.

PET SEMATARY THE RAMONES



3 The Ramones made a ton of cash from this Stephen King tie-in, but conversely, the video finds them looking faintly bored in a graveyard.



From Mr Stay Puft to Slimer (top right), there's no end to the film's iconic imagery.



Among the predominantly male-dominated cast, Sigourney Weaver more than holds her own.

and the history that they reveal about the architect of Dana's building is a brilliant combination of HP Lovecraft and Aleister Crowley. Ramis delivers the monologue with barely restrained glee. "The architect's name was Evo Shandor. I found it in *Tobin's Spirit Guide*. He was also a doctor, performed a lot of unnecessary surgery. And then in 1920, he started a secret society... After the First World War, Shandor decided that society was too sick to survive. And he wasn't alone; he had close to a 1,000 followers when he died. They conducted rituals up on the roof – bizarre rituals, intended to bring about the end of the world, and now it looks like it might actually happen."

Of course, this horror doesn't last too long. When Peter, Ray, Egon and Winston are forced to choose the form of their destruction, Ray goes to his happy place and gives cinema one of its defining

images: Mr Stay Puft. Try keeping a smile from your face as the skyscraper-sized marshmallow man waddles through NYC. Still, nobody steps on a church in Venkman's town, and the stage is set for the ultimate demonstration of the Ghostbusters' unity. Aware that it could well be suicide, they finally cross the streams. "See you on the other side, Ray." "Nice working with you, Dr Venkman."

There's so much to talk about that we didn't get to touch on Louis' party, migrating sponges, big Twinkies, the whole hotel sequence, Dana's fridge, Vinz Clortho, Alice the librarian, or the theme song. Which is why we'll always keep coming back to *Ghostbusters*. "We're ready to believe you!"

Gremlins is available to purchase now on Blu-ray.



WATCH FIRST



AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON (1981)

John Landis' classic has an inverse horror-comedy ratio to *Ghostbusters*, but it's hilarious and chilling.

WATCH NEXT



THE FRIGHTENERS (1996)

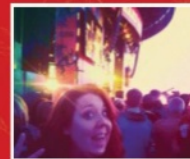
Michael J Fox hunts ghosts in Peter Jackson's flawed but frequently brilliant cult classic.

YOUR TAKE ON THE CLASSIC

WHAT YOU THOUGHT @SCIFINOW



"Funny, scary, clever, brilliant acting..... DON'T CROSS THE STREAMS!"
@tattooed_mummy



"Pure, unadulterated, Venkman, Louis, Stay Puft, Janine, stream-crossing, JOY. What can't you love about that?"
@evilnoodle



"Listen! You smell something?"
#SayNoMore
@HippyDave



"The most genre defying, entertaining movie ever. I can watch it and watch it, and have done so since I was seven."
@lastcyberpunk



"Ghostbusters had the magic combination of Bill Murray's humour, wonderful pre-CGI SFX and that awesome Eighties soundtrack!"
@indianamulder

THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK ALICE COOPER



4 Horror aficionado Cooper gave Jason Lives: Friday The 13th Part VI a far better soundtrack than it deserved. Chich ichih ahaha...

DEEPEST BLUEST LL COOL J



5 LL Cool J earns a place on this list by writing his tie-in song from the perspective of the sharks hunting the movie's characters. Genius.

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY

IT'S CONSISTENTLY HAILED AS ONE OF THE GREATEST SCIENCE FICTION FILMS EVER MADE, AND HASN'T AGED A DAY IN NEARLY 50 YEARS. WITH THE RELEASE OF TASCHEN'S NEW BOOK EXAMINING THE HISTORY AND PRODUCTION OF THE FILM, SCIFINOW JOURNEYS BEYOND THE INFINITE AND INTO THE MIND OF ONE OF CINEMA'S GENIUSES...

Truly visionary films are a rare thing indeed. With promotional material boldly claiming that label for every director with a sense of style, the word starts to lose some of its weight – until, that is, we revisit a film from a true auteur. A film that made us change the way we looked not only at a genre, but at the medium as a whole.

Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* continues to stand as the definitive work of science fiction cinema nearly 50 years after its 1968 release. It has lost none of its power to beguile and stun, and still challenges viewers to bring their own thoughts to the film. We can quibble over whether or not it's the best film that Kubrick ever made, but few can argue that it's anything other than the most important piece of forward-looking science fiction on film, something that is driven home as we arrive at the Kubrick family estate for the launch of Taschen's beautiful new book on the film's genesis and creation.

"*2001* is not a science fiction film," Jan Harlan, Kubrick's brother-in-law and producer on the movie, remarks with a grin as he ushers us into the library for our interview. "I think it's a philosophical film. Because it's a film about something we don't know, and we are purely speculating. We have no idea, and that's why the film will never age!"

Indeed, you don't watch *2001: A Space Odyssey* to be told why HAL decides to murder the crew, where the monolith came from or what exactly happens to

astronaut Dave Bowman (Keir Dullea) in the film's final 20 minutes; you go to marvel at the infinite possibilities, and come out with questions and fuel for endless discussions. It's why it not only endures repeat viewings, but actively rewards them, and it's why we'll never stop hungering for details about it. As we change, so does our understanding of the film, as Christiane Kubrick, the late director's widow, is keen to stress.

"We're still thinking!" she smiles. "Well, I think people are always thinking, 'Why is my brain just big

**"STANLEY KUBRICK
ALWAYS MADE
ONLY ENEMIES AND
FRIENDS – VERY
FEW PEOPLE WERE
LUKEWARM"**

JAN HARLAN

enough so I can suffer from the fact that I know it's too small to tell me anything that I want to know?" I mean, imagine, we have that as a gift. Thanks! This is what makes us so wicked!"

The questions about life, the universe and everything that we leave the film with are certainly a struggle to comprehend, but the effort that went into conceiving

and executing it was just as gargantuan. Kubrick's preparation, dedication and perfectionism are the stuff of cinematic legend. Once the filmmaker had committed to a project, he gave himself over to it completely. *Dr Strangelove, Or: How I Learned To Stop Worrying And Love The Bomb* was an apocalyptic comedy that ended with the end of all life as we know it. For his next project, Kubrick wanted to look to the stars, and saw an opportunity to make a film in a genre that he had cherished for a long time.

"Stanley was fascinated by science fiction as a boy," Piers Bizony, author of Taschen's *The Making Of Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey*, tells us. "His love of technology and belief in the possibilities of the future never left him, even if he did become renowned in later years for his pessimism about human foolishness. He was also very interested in the possibility of extraterrestrial intelligence, and was pretty sure that it must exist. A scrapped early version of the *Dr Strangelove* screenplay even had alien intelligences looking at a scorched, totally dead Earth and commenting on how this disaster had come to pass because of an idiotic and uncontrollable global nuclear war."

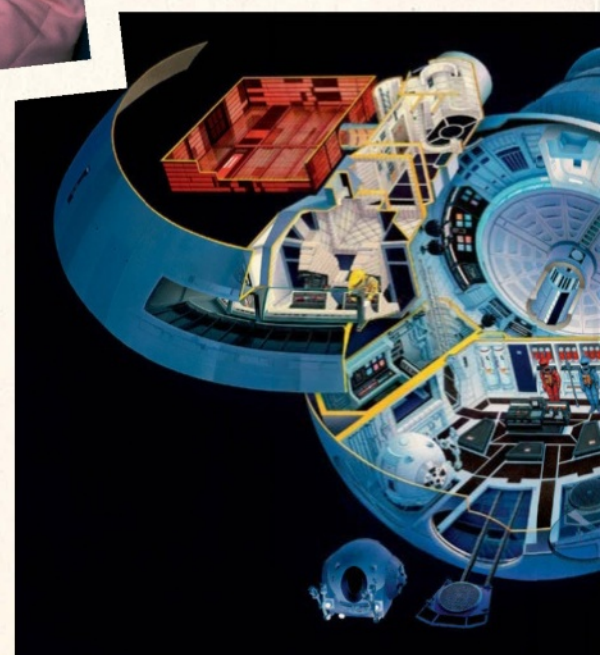
That ending might have been abandoned, but Kubrick's desire to make his contribution to the sci-fi genre was far from on the wane. Bizony tells us that the timing was perfect; a combination of a long-standing fascination with the possibilities of space exploration and real-world scientific breakthroughs in taking ➤



NEVER BEFORE SEEN IMAGES

These incredible behind-the-scenes pictures, technical drawings, production photos and concept art are just a small sample of the hundreds of images on display in Taschen's luscious new volume, *The Making Of Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey* from writer Piers Bizony and designers M/M (Paris).

Containing four books in a monolith-inspired metal slipcase and limited to 1,500 copies (all signed by Christiane Kubrick), *The Making Of Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey* also features a testimony from co-writer and SF luminary Arthur C Clarke, and is available now for £450. Find out more at Taschen.com.



➤ mankind into the stars. "Like many science fiction enthusiasts of his generation, Kubrick had a hunch that human expansion into the Solar System might be a beneficial way of exploiting nuclear energy, and might also help resolve global tensions by giving humanity an essentially limitless new horizon to explore and inhabit," he tells us. Kubrick was also very aware of the trends in sci-fi cinema, from kaiju classics to *When Worlds Collide* and *Forbidden Planet*.

"Even back in 1957 or '58, he'd been looking at Japanese monster films, George Pal productions and so on, just to check out what was going on in the world of film science fiction, wondering if there might be some way for him to enter the field," says Bizony. "By the early Sixties, NASA was gearing up for its attempt on the Moon, so Kubrick felt that a big film about space would probably be a good commercial and creative bet for him. Also, for his next project he wanted to get away from the bleakness of *Strangelove*."

As invested as he was in the genre, Kubrick knew that he would need a native guide to help him with the screenplay, and settled on Arthur C Clarke as the best collaborator. He assumed that the author was a recluse, but Clarke was thrilled to have the opportunity to work with cinema's 'enfant terrible'. After struggling to find one of his works to adapt (their first choice,

Childhood's End, had already been optioned), they settled on the idea of using one of Clarke's short stories, 'The Sentinel', as the basis for a new project that would be developed as a novel and script. The script would be credited 'by Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C Clarke', while the novel would see the credits reversed.

Kubrick's controlling nature as a filmmaker is as well-documented as his perfectionism. Much has been made, for example, of his difficult relationship with Stephen King during the production of *The Shining*, as the liberties he and co-writer Diane Johnson took with the source material led to King claiming that he disliked the film (at least as a film of his book). However, the relationship between Clarke and Kubrick was a very happy one. Both men had strong personalities, and they found that their interests and energies meshed very well as they began to sink their

teeth into the combination of scientific research and philosophical debate.

"He loved it. He loved that mixture, and so did Arthur C Clarke," Christiane tells us. "They were of one opinion on how thrilling that is. They really liked each other; they were two intelligent people with a good imagination. Really stimulating and great fun. They had a good time."

"They were edging each other on," adds Harlan.

They had the plot structure mapped out, with 'The Dawn Of Man', 'Jupiter Mission: Eighteen Months Later' and 'Jupiter And Beyond The Infinite' providing the three principal segments of what was, at that point, still called *Journey Beyond The Stars*. In April 1965, the film was renamed *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and Kubrick immersed himself in developing the sets and effects for the film, glorying in the possibilities of creating

"KUBRICK'S ATTITUDE WAS ALWAYS TO ENCOURAGE EXPERIMENTATION – THAT'S WHY YOUNG EFFECTS ARTISTS LOVED WORKING FOR HIM, DESPITE HIS PERFECTIONISM" PIER'S BIZONY

I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT, DAVE

Keir Dullea tells SciFiNow about playing Kubrick's Starman



What were you told about the character – was there any back story?

We had several meetings with Stanley, and we had character and psychological profiles, which included the fact that we were double doctorates, and of course the script indicated enough so we knew what to play. Part of our psychological profiles indicated that it would take something momentous to shake us – as opposed to the average person, who would have gone bananas! For me, *2001* was not the most demanding role or even the most fulfilling role, but what stands out is working with that genius Kubrick – I loved every moment.

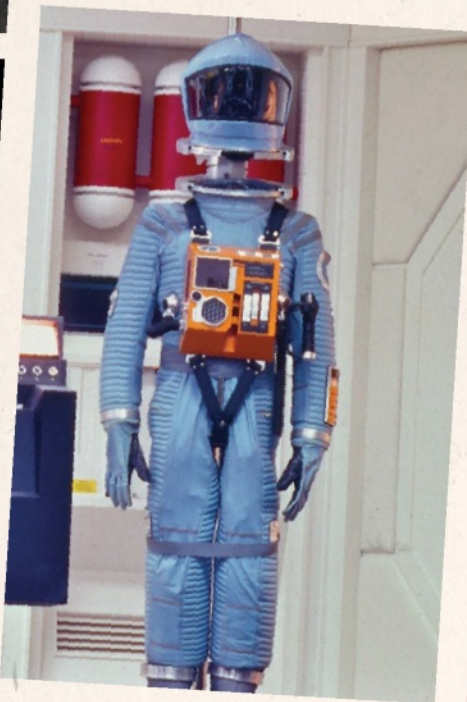
What was it like filming the airlock sequence?

The sequence when HAL won't let me in, they couldn't use a stunt man, because I had no helmet and I'd be recognisable – it was like a two-storey tall camera on the floor putting up, and in the ceiling of that set was the opening where I'd manoeuvred the pod against... I had to be dropped within inches of the lenses, so they had piano wire woven into my spacesuit, and as I would be dropped my body would be between the wire and the camera, so the camera would never see the wire. At the other end of that wire was woven into a rope and two-stories up, out of sight, parallel with the set that you see, next to that opening – measured exactly – he tied huge knots. I dove free-fall head-first headed two stories down, toward the lenses, and as soon as the knot reached his gloved hand he jumped off the platform, and I went whipping up.

People said, "How are you willing to do that?" and I said working with Stanley was just mesmerising. You knew you were in the presence of genius, and therefore you were safe. That particular stunt was done in one take, so I never had to repeat that [laughs].

How did you feel when you first saw the film? Did it live up to or surpass your expectations?

It is an iconic film, and it is a brilliant film, but that has only happened as time went on. At the time it got terribly mixed reviews, and a lot of people walked out of the premiere. Pauline Kael, one of the great critics, hated it. It got some great reviews, but it also got terrible reviews – absolutely smeared. It took the hippy generation, the people who smoked funny cigarettes, who kept going, and in fact they changed their advertising campaign and posters began to have a phrase like 'See the ultimate trip', but my own reaction... I felt it was wondrous, but when you're in a film it's hard to see the forest for the trees, because each tree was like that day's shoot, and it's hard to kind of encompass, step back and see it as a whole. And the special effects, which weren't generated by computer, were so wondrous especially toward the end of the film and his shots were just extraordinary – his eye is just extraordinary, and that's true for all his movies. Almost every film he ever made has blown me away.



technology that did not exist for everything from deep-space communications to the Pan-Am space flight taken by Dr Heywood Floyd (William Sylvester).

"For Kubrick, the total film technician, solving this kind of problem was one of the things he loved best," Bizony explains. "Just for example: among the great forward-thinking achievements of *2001* was the use of what appear to be colour flat-screen digital displays in almost all the spaceship interior sets. This was accomplished at a time when the UK had televisions like glass goldfish bowls, and could only show grainy, flickering black-and-white images. As for computer graphics, there was barely any such thing anywhere in the mid-Sixties. For *2001*, the flat screens of the future were faked by using, in some cases, a dozen small film projection systems simultaneously, all built cleverly into the walls and control panels of the sets. Imagine synchronising all those projectors!

"Additionally, it took many months – up to a year, I believe – for the special effects team to complete the countless little films that are displayed on all those control panel projection screens. The films were made by animating thousands of snippets of Letraset graphics, or drawings from science journals, and 'bringing them to life' in a way that looked right for the film. A semi-automatic animation system, built

from scratch by the effects crew, helped relieve some of the tedium."

These painstaking processes are indicative of the filming as a whole. Kubrick had no interest in creating a science fiction film that looked like anything he had seen before, and he pushed his crew to find new and challenging ways of creating. "Kubrick's attitude was always to encourage experimentation," Bizony tells us. "That's why young effects artists loved working for him, despite his perfectionism. What he hated above all was if some old duffer with years of film experience told him, 'Stanley, it's not done that way...' He'd ask, 'Well, why not?' And then he'd encourage more open-minded technicians to build rigs and mechanisms that no one else in the film business had ever thought of before. Another major development for *2001* was the idea of 'motion control', where cameras make multiple movement passes across the same scene, piling up multiple exposure data in a rigorously controlled way. Without *2001*'s invention of these new effects techniques, George Lucas wouldn't have been able to make the outer space scenes of *Star Wars* look so good ten years later."

Although *2001* doesn't have the same reputation for a rocky production as *The Shining* or *Eyes Wide Shut*, there were problems, largely due to the challenges ➤

10 UNFORGETTABLE SEQUENCES FROM 2001

The moments that make a movie masterpiece



1. DAISY, DAISY

Bowman begins to shut down HAL as the AI pleads for him to stop, showing more humanity than any other character in the film. "I'm afraid. I'm afraid, Dave. Dave, my mind is going. I can feel it."



2. MATCH CUT

The first time jump is a beautifully executed piece of filmmaking, as the ape smashes the skeleton, sending the bone flying into the air and Kubrick executes the match cut to a satellite orbiting the Earth.



3. STAR CHILD

The final moment in the film may challenge the viewer to provide their own explanation (it's Bowman, right?), but at this point in the film, it's simply the ultimate image of rebirth and possibility.



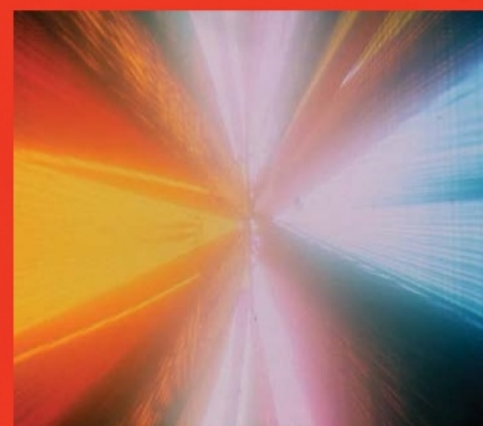
4. THE MONOLITH

The first appearance of *2001*'s beautifully simple but absolutely perfect symbol of extraterrestrial intelligence appears to the prehistoric apes, sending them into a frenzy and setting mankind on its course.



5. OPEN UP

After Bowman's attempts to rescue Frank have failed, the astronaut attempts to get back into his ship. "Open the pod bay doors, Hal." "I'm sorry, Dave. I'm afraid I can't do that."



6. BEYOND THE INFINITE

The stunning sequence as Bowman is taken through the tunnel of light after approaching the monolith is one of the film's most frequently referenced scenes, and time has diminished none of its power.



7. RUN-AROUND

Originally, the sequence with Poole jogging around the interior of the Discovery One stretched on for much longer, and it's certainly hypnotic as the camera glides in front of his gravity-defying stretch.



8. PAN-AM SPACE FLIGHT

Doctor Heywood Floyd's journey from Earth is a brilliant mix of recognisable and far-fetched, as he snoozes on the Pan-Am space plane to his meeting, his pen drifting out of his hand in zero-gravity.



9. HAL READS LIPS

Like *Psycho*, it's impossible to watch *2001* without knowing that HAL will eventually flip out, but the sequence in which he sees Bowman and Poole discussing his failures is chilling stuff.



10. OVERTURE

Fittingly for a film about life's possibilities and mankind's journey, *2001* opens on a blank canvas. As the music slowly starts and swells, this overture brings us to the opening title.

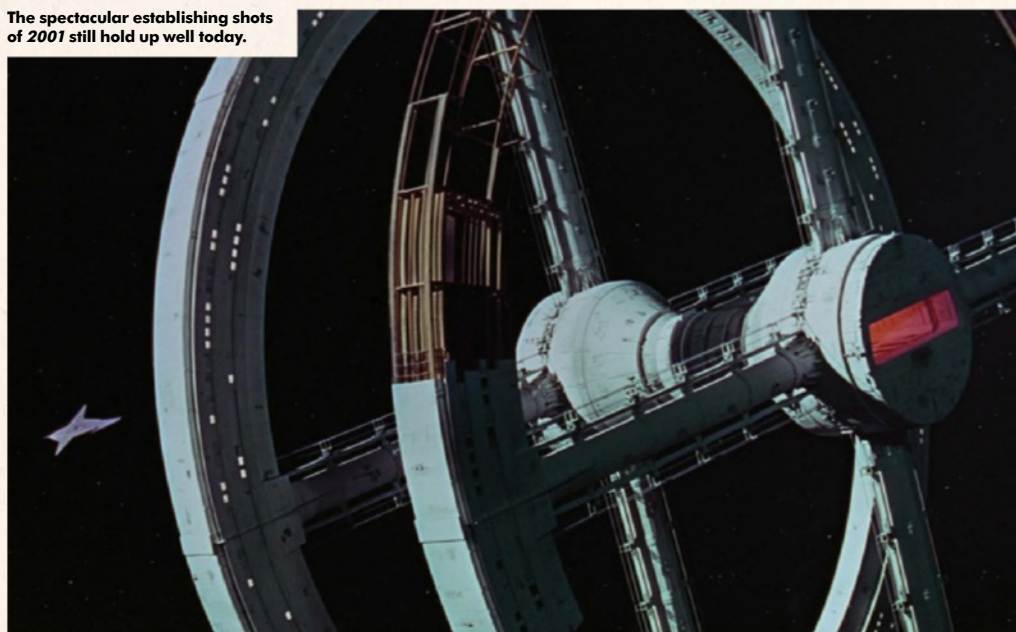
➤ that Kubrick confronted his special effects team with and the sheer length of the production. The British crews working on the film, especially the veterans, were used to a more regimented process on set. Working on a Kubrick film was something very different.

"If there were tensions, it was really within the special effects crew, who worked for two years non-stop, and sometimes nearly three in a few cases. It was gruelling, often very repetitive and frustrating, because everything had to look perfect," explains Bizony. "One or two effects staffers quit, but the ones who stayed, of course, went on to have brilliant careers. Stanley couldn't understand why anyone would want to quit. What could be more fun, or satisfying, than making *2001*? Well, of course, one or two people wanted to, you know, get on with their lives, but the consequence of Stanley's relentless demands for perfection are clear to this day. Although it's nearly half a century since work on *2001* began, the film still looks incredibly crisp and fresh today. It's hardly dated at all."

As Bizony states, the results of Kubrick's tireless perfectionism are there for all to see. The working environment may have been tough, but it's interesting to note that for every incident of an actor or crew member complaining, there's at least another to be found of someone glorying in the experience of working with a genius. Malcolm McDowell may have hated the experience of having his eyelids held open in *A Clockwork Orange*, for example, but he has frequently made clear how much he enjoyed his time spent with the director.

"Well, it's a terrible cliché, but he was ahead of his time," Christiane explains. "I felt in his presence you always had a quicker pulse about everything. So there

The spectacular establishing shots of *2001* still hold up well today.



were very few people who he could run into who could keep up with him. And that was sometimes driving him crazy, and sometimes somebody like Arthur C Clarke was, of course, brilliant. He worked with Michael Herr [author of *Dispatches* and co-writer of *Full Metal Jacket*] and many people with whom he felt on one level. But he was so interested in what's next, what's next, what's next – just very energetic and very intense, and I think that makes you different."

That intensity was certainly required, as the film's schedule stretched on and the budget began to spiral

out of control. The initial allocated amount had been \$4.5 million, but the production ended up spending roughly \$6 million on special effects. In total, the cost of *2001: A Space Odyssey* was \$10.5 million, an amount that had MGM executives travelling to London to find out exactly what Kubrick was making.

"Stanley was quite famous at this point because of his success with *Dr Strangelove*," says Bizony. "MGM did get very anxious as the production dragged over time and over budget. What's more, when they finally saw what Kubrick had made, a lot of the older and more ➤

"ARTHUR C CLARKE AND STANLEY KUBRICK REALLY LIKED EACH OTHER; THEY WERE TWO INTELLIGENT PEOPLE WITH A GOOD IMAGINATION" CHRISTIANE KUBRICK



Kubrick demanded utter dedication from his special effects crew – an approach that paid off.

LOST IN SPACE

Why *2001* could have been very different...

Following its first test screening, Kubrick cut 19 minutes of footage, but there were several ideas and sequences that were never shown or simply discarded. When we ask Christiane Kubrick what the biggest surprise was for her when helping to prepare the book, she's very quick with her answer. "I was reminded of all the cul-de-sacs that it went into when we were still going to do extraterrestrials," she remembers. "There was a feeling of, 'This is not going to work, because everybody has tried to imagine it, and I want something that doesn't remind me of anything, that doesn't exist. It's always an insect, a body, a sexual thing, it's always something that creeps in that isn't totally abstract and totally new.' Totally abstract tends to be boring, because we don't relate to anything. And so, you could say a totally new extraterrestrial would be on a planet where you would be weighing 500 kilos per inch, then you would exist as a veil. That's possible, but there's nothing to look at! So we go back to insects and things with many teeth, and it's pathetic how hard it is to imagine something that we already know."

As hard as that is to imagine, it's somehow even stranger to think that we could also have seen HAL with a rival. "One early version of the script had a back-up software intelligence inside the same circuitry as HAL," Bizony tells us. "This 'twin' explains to Bowman why the primary version went crazy. 'Don't listen to him, Dave,' Hal interrupts. I almost wet myself laughing, and I'm glad Stanley dumped that schizophrenic idea."

THE LONG SHADOW OF A SPACE ODYSSEY

It's one of the most frequently referenced movies in popular culture, and we've picked out seven of the best homages

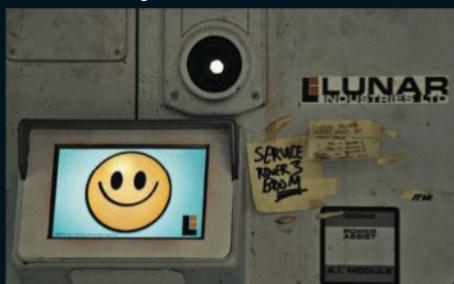
1. THE SIMPSONS

Stanley Kubrick has been referenced innumerable times by Matt Groening's show, although perhaps the finest 2001-infused moment is the match-cut in the episode 'Deep Space Homer'.



2. MOON

Duncan Jones' debut gave Sam Rockwell's lunar miner a single companion: robotic helper GERTY. Kevin Spacey gave a tremendous vocal performance; soothing but somehow knowing.



3. EL TOPO

The audiences who piled in to see 2001 and have their mind expanded fuelled the success of successive mind-benders like Alejandro Jodorowsky's spiritual Western *El Topo*.



4. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND

Spielberg has often spoken about the huge influence Kubrick had on his work, particularly *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind*, and he picked up the reins on AI when the master passed away.



5. WALL-E

2001's influence can be found most prominently in Andrew Stanton's deeply lovely WALL-E, which features long periods with no dialogue and an evil ship's computer plotting against its passengers.



6. SUNSHINE

Cillian Murphy's physicist is tormented by visions of falling into the sun in Danny Boyle's mostly amazing sci-fi, and is confronted with the stuff of his nightmares in the film's reality-warping finale.



7. MAD MEN

The latest season of Matthew Weiner's masterpiece found the computer age intruding on the creative staff of SC&P, with the office's new computer driving the twitchy Ginsberg to madness.



➔ traditional film executives were, frankly, appalled. They really didn't understand 2001 at all."

However, it wasn't just the MGM executives who were struggling to understand what they had paid for. The critical reaction to the film was markedly split between those who were stunned and those who were simply bored. "Stanley was not a filmmaker where everybody thought it was wonderful, this was for *Eyes Wide Shut* or *Full Metal Jacket* or *Dr Strangelove*," Jan Harlan points out. "He always made enemies and friends, and very few people were lukewarm in between. They either loved it or they really didn't, which is OK! The same is true for many great artists, painters, novelists and composers!"

Tellingly, the critical reaction changed as the weeks passed and writers were convinced to revisit the film. It wouldn't be the critics that would make 2001 a profitable film, however; it was the audiences. "The film was very well received by young people," Harlan tells us. "They made him a success," adds Kubrick. It became a film embraced by the counter-culture, with a reputation for the cinema screens reeking of pot smoke. Its impact clearly goes beyond stoners, of course, but it was clear that it was appealing to a new generation of filmgoers. The impact on popular culture has never died away, because it is that generation – who were stunned by the film – that went on to create our popular culture.

"I think we are still assessing this, just as we are evaluating the impact on the human psyche of Apollo's mission to the Moon. 2001 continues to cast its shadow," Bizony tells us. "The Virgin Galactic



Keir Dullea reflected that he loved every moment of working with Kubrick on *2001*.



The ending is famously open to interpretation, with any definitive meaning behind it remaining elusive.



"A SCRAPPED EARLY VERSION OF THE DR STRANGELOVE SCREENPLAY EVEN HAD ALIEN INTELLIGENCES LOOKING AT A SCORCHED, TOTALLY DEAD EARTH" PIERIS BIZONY

spaceplane and the other private rocket projects were inspired by it. The iPod is called a 'pod' because of the use of that word in the film, and so on. Filmmakers continue to hold up *2001* as the ultimate example of how a great director can put his or her personal stamp on a project, even when it is financed by the Hollywood factory system. Countless artists, writers, scientists, computer innovators and, of course, filmmakers, who were kids when *2001* came out, are the creative forces behind the technologically amazing world we live in today. As a manifesto for human progress into space, *2001* still has to be matched by reality. We still do not have a permanent lunar settlement, even though such a goal is easy to achieve today, and just three days flight time away. *2001* is a perpetual challenge to this generation: what's the hold-up, when everything that we see on screen is so obviously achievable?"

Having watched people walking out and witnessing the divided reactions to the film, you have to wonder whether Kubrick could have known that *2001* would have this longevity; that his family would be helping authors and archivists to bring his incredible way of working to light all these years later. "No, he didn't know," Christiane tells us. "He'd seen many films die away very quickly, and I think he found it very self-

destructive to think about these types of things for too long, 'Ah, it's too depressing.' I think he was protecting himself from having dark thoughts, because he would sort of fall down a black hole immediately, because his imagination would also go down in the same way."

In fact, Harlan tells us that Kubrick had very little interest in revisiting his films once he had moved on to the next project. "He was very much a person who lived in the present and future, and not in the past," he explains. "He looked sometimes at new internegatives and for technical reasons, but that's the only reason why he would ever revisit an old film."

And yet, here we are, going back to *2001: A Space Odyssey* over and over again. No matter how many times you've seen it, the film draws you in. Rather than keep you at a distance, it forces you to engage. Standing in the garden following the heartfelt presentation of this exhaustive book that's an art object in itself, we're very much aware that we're commemorating a masterpiece from a true genius. No other filmmaker has had the same impact.

"Never once does this long, slow, cold, emotionless, frustrating and ambiguous movie reach out to its audience and give them a helping hand in terms of relating to it or understanding it," Bizony tells us.

"Those who hate it hate it, but those who love it see it again and again, finding more in it on each occasion. When astronaut Bowman regains his primitive fighting spirit and smashes HAL, this seems to be the trigger for his advancement to a next level of human consciousness. How thought-provoking is that! Quite simply, the film is timeless, and at least until we meet real aliens, its subject matter and philosophical ideas can never wear out."

The film's inability to date means that there will always be a new audience for the film. As we grow older, we approach it differently, but there will always be viewers coming to it for the first time, and their interpretation will almost certainly be different to ours.

"I think we're watching three-year olds on computers with little fat sausage fingers finding things and thinking about things that are way out of... that, I'm convinced, changes their brains," Kubrick tells us. "They are different children from the way we grew up. And you can see it in front of you, the things they talk about, the things that are important to them have changed."

"We know that the world has been around for millions of years, and that evolution has been there and we are developed from I don't know where, but from very, very little, and very slowly," adds Harlan. "And evolution is, I think, the greatest compliment to creation! The fact that it is possible that we evolve is amazing!"



The Making Of Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey is available now from Taschen. *2001: A Space Odyssey* is out now on DVD and Blu-ray.

TEN YEARS AGO, SPACED ALUMNI EDGAR WRIGHT AND SIMON PEGG BROUGHT US THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE AFTER THE NIGHT BEFORE IN HORROR-COMEDY SHAUN OF THE DEAD, A LOVE LETTER TO GEORGE ROMERO AND THE FIRST FILM IN THEIR BLOOD AND ICE CREAM TRILOGY. SCIFINOW TAKES A LOOK BACK AT THE ENDURING APPEAL OF THIS CULT CLASSIC...

SHAUN OF THE DEAD



Film

RUNNING TIME:
99 minutes

RELEASE DATE:
9 April 2004

DIRECTOR:
Edgar Wright

WRITERS: Simon Pegg,
Edgar Wright

CAST: Simon Pegg, Nick
Frost, Kate Ashfield,
Dylan Moran, Lucy Davis,
Bill Nighy, Penelope Wilton

About

Shaun is stuck in a rut. Trapped in a dead-end job and at the tail-end of his 20s, he spends most of his evenings down the pub with his frustrated girlfriend Liz and tag-along slacker best mate Ed. When Liz dumps him, Shaun drowns his sorrows with Ed, only to wake up in the middle of a zombie apocalypse. Armed with whatever they can find in the shed, they battle through the undead to rescue Liz, her flatmates and Shaun's mother Barbara. Together, the clueless survivors make their way to the Winchester and wait for the whole thing to blow over...

No matter what Hollywood tells you, you would probably be terrible in a zombie apocalypse. Perhaps not terrible, but certainly mediocre, because even with a shotgun cocked and a bandana wrapped around your head, everyday life can't prepare you for the dead rising from their graves.

Yet *Shaun Of The Dead*, directed by Edgar Wright and co-written with actor Simon Pegg, manages to make a believable hero out of a directionless electronics salesman while masterfully mixing horror and comedy. The film is a delight for fans of both genres, and hugely influenced by cult sitcom *Spaced*, created by Pegg and Jessica Hynes.

The opening shot of Shaun (Pegg)'s overwhelmed face says it all: it's time at the bar, and Shaun is in the Winchester for the millionth time in his life. As he blankly alternates between a pint and a drag of his cigarette, we hear the disheartened voice of his girlfriend Liz (Kate Ashfield).

She wants more out of life than going to the pub with him and his deadbeat best friend Ed (Nick Frost), or her friends David (Dylan Moran) and Dianne (Lucy Davis). Things have to change.

Wright adds each of the main characters to the frame when you don't expect them. "It's not that I don't like Ed. Ed, it's not that I don't like you." What he chooses to leave out of the frame, and then introduces – like speeding bar snacks – makes what could have been a fairly straight-laced prologue comically understated.

Everyone from the vacant-looking checkout girl to the clubbers in the opening titles will become zombies, but you wouldn't tell from how lifeless they already seem in their boring lives. Doing his best Jack Torrance stare, Shaun looks every bit as numb, and you can't blame him.

"THE FILM IS A DELIGHT FOR FANS OF BOTH GENRES"

His job is banal, his young colleagues call him grandad at 29, his stepfather Philip (Bill Nighy) stops by for a conversation dripping in previous disappointments, and flatmate Pete (Peter Serafinowicz) wants Ed out of the house for being deadweight. Shaun's life sucks.

In the first of many nods to *Spaced*, there's a cameo from co-writer Jessica Hynes as Shaun's old friend Yvonne. During their conversation, Shaun realises he's dropped the ball again and forgotten to book a romantic dinner with Liz.

"If I don't do something, I'm going to end up going into that pub every night for the rest of my life like the rest of those sad old fuckers, drinking myself to death and wondering what the hell happened."



She dumped him. It was brutal. Poor Shaun ends up back at the Winchester with Ed. When the opening bars of Chicago's *If You Leave Me Now* come on the pub jukebox, it's impossible not to laugh at Pegg's shattered expression.

"Who the hell put this on?" asks Ed.

"It's on random," Shaun blubs.

Astute music choices are another hallmark of Wright's directorial style, and the soundtrack uses songs in a tongue-in-cheek way, while Goblin-esque incidental music from Pete Woodhead and Daniel Mudford dials up the tension.

Watching these two feels authentic not just because the actors are real-life friends, but because it's a familiar scene to anyone who's been dumped or helped a friend drown their sorrows.

"I'm not gonna say there's plenty more fish in the sea. I'm not going to say if you love her, let her go. And I'm not going to bombard you with clichés. But what I will say is this: it's not the end of the world."

And with Ed's fate-tempting words, a shadowy, groaning figure places a hand on the pub window.

Shaun comes face-to-face with a zombie 30 minutes in, but like *Invasion Of The Body Snatchers* (1978) there are odd goings-on in the background from the very start, the joke being that he remains completely oblivious. The next morning he's too wrapped up in his own problems to notice the bloody handprints on the corner shop fridge, or that everyone around him is a walking corpse.

"There's a girl in the garden", says Ed. They assume she's drunk until she survives being impaled on a garden pipe. The sound effect as Ed winds his disposable camera spool without breaking his shocked gaze always gets a big laugh.

After debating which LPs to use as projectiles, they find weapons and hatch a plan to rescue Liz and Shaun's mum Barbara (Penelope Wilton), taking them to the safest place they can think of: the Winchester. If *Dawn Of The Dead* satirises American consumerism by setting the action in a mall, British zombie slayers holed up in a pub speaks more to our love of hog lumps and warm beer.

Shaun can't bring himself to kill his infected stepdad Philip, so they take his car to pick up Liz, David and Dianne. Bleeding out in the backseat, Philip tells Shaun that he always loved him, before turning into a zombie and forcing the group onto the ➤



CLASSIC QUOTES

"THERE'S A GIRL IN THE GARDEN"
ED

"I'M QUITE ALL RIGHT BARBARA, I RAN IT UNDER A COLD TAP"

PHILIP

"TAKE CAR. GO TO MUM'S. KILL PHIL. GRAB LIZ, GO TO THE WINCHESTER, HAVE A NICE COLD PINT, AND WAIT FOR ALL OF THIS TO BLOW OVER. HOW'S THAT FOR A SLICE OF FRIED GOLD?"

SHAUN

"WHO DIED AND MADE YOU FUCKING KING OF THE ZOMBIES?"

ED

"YOU'VE GOT RED ON YOU"

PHILIP

"IT'S BEEN A FUNNY SORT OF DAY, HASN'T IT?"

DIANNE

"JUST LOOK AT THE FACE: IT'S VACANT, WITH A HINT OF SADNESS. LIKE A DRUNK WHO'S LOST A BET"

DIANNE

"LIZZY, HOW CAN YOU PUT YOUR FAITH IN A MAN YOU SPECTACULARLY BINNED FOR BEING UNRELIABLE? A MAN WHOSE IDEA OF A ROMANTIC NIGHTSPOT AND AN IMPENETRABLE FORTRESS ARE THE SAME THING?"

DAVID



Of all the supporting cast, Bill Nighy is perhaps most memorable as Shaun's disapproving stepdad Philip.



Shaun Of The Dead is full of homages to classic zombie movies.

➤ streets. It's the first of many emotional moments for Pegg.

"Listen to me, Mum. That's not even your husband in there. I know it looks like him, but there is nothing of the man you loved in that car now, nothing", says Shaun as zombie Philip nudges off Ed's cassette.

En route, the group meets Yvonne leading a bizarre world line-up of survivors that mirrors theirs, including Julia Deakin (*Spaced*), Martin Freeman (*The Office*), Reece Shearsmith (*The League Of Gentlemen*), Tamsin Greig (*Black Books*) and Matt Lucas (*Little Britain*).

The scene is a glimpse of another film we didn't get to see, or could be an homage to *Resident Evil 2*, a survival-horror game that has both a male and female character fighting zombies in separate but converging storylines. It's also the game that Pegg's character Tim Bisley played obsessively in the *Spaced* episode 'Art' that inspired the film.

The survivors make it to the Winchester by mimicking zombies, but at the last second Ed's breaks character and answers



his phone. A zombie chase and a hilarious synchronised fight sequence set to Queen's *Don't Stop Me Now* later, and Shaun levels up to wielding a shotgun. He's a terrible shot, relying on the group to guide him. It's like watching a team on *The Crystal Maze* trying to solve a puzzle by committee.



By the final act, the group is at the end of its collective tether. Barbara succumbs to a concealed zombie bite, and David tries to finish her off before she rises again. It forces out some ugly truths about his barely concealed feelings for Liz and provokes a Mexican standoff. Even in the face of certain doom, their silly squabbles still get in the way.

David is torn to pieces by the undead, Dianne chases after him – brandishing

one of his legs – and Ed gets bitten in the chaos. Shaun, Liz and Ed make their way to the cellar and contemplate ending their lives before getting eaten.

"Maybe you should do me. I'll only muck it up if I have to do myself."

"You know, I don't think I've got it in me to shoot my flatmate, my mum, and my girlfriend all in the same evening."

Ed says the couple should make a go of things without him, and shares a tender last moment with his best friend – before ruining it with a fart. Shaun and Liz find their way out on to the street again just as the army arrives to take out the undead. The action flashes forward to Shaun and Liz living together in a world where zombie reality TV and game shows are now the norm. Shaun goes out to the garden shed to play videogames with a chained-up zombie Ed, still playing *Timesplitters*. In a way, it is a happy ending.

"IT RETAINS A VERY BRITISH SENSE OF AWKWARDNESS"

THE DEAD RISING

Five references to classic movies in Shaun Of The Dead

NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD



1 Ed's line, "We're coming to get you Barbara" is directly inspired by Johnny's dialogue in the opening scene of *Night Of The Living Dead*.

AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON



2 Shaun nudging the mirror shut in the bathroom to reveal Pete behind him is a nod to a similar scene in *An American Werewolf In London*.

DAWN OF THE DEAD



3 Shaun works at Foree Electric, named for actor Ken Foree. There's also a line about a colleague called Ash, likely referencing Ash Williams from *The Evil Dead*.



Uniquely, there is also something approaching a happy ending.

Shaun Of The Dead is a film that begs to be rewatched for the sheer volume of references and foreshadowing. Indeed, Ed actually predicts the film's events early on.

"We'll have a bloody Mary first thing [the checkout girl], a bite at the King's Head [Philip gets bitten], a couple at the Little Princess [picking up David, Dianne and Liz], stagger back here, and bang – back at the bar for shots." How's that for a slice of fried gold?

The film retains a very British sense of awkwardness underneath the unexpected heroism that's a lot more believable than the run-of-the-mill horror or action flick. Shaun does become more assertive, but he still has a tiff with his best mate in front of a horde of rabid zombies.

There is an unmistakable rhythm to Wright's films that make his work simultaneously naturalistic and stylised. He films mundane actions using inventive camera techniques, making the humdrum seem comically grand. Think of Michael Cera tying his shoelaces in *Scott Pilgrim Vs The World* (2010), and you can see

how he comes back to this motif time and time again.

But clever transitions between scenes, whip pans onto innocuous items and the funny use of music cues aren't merely a bag of tricks; they're the hallmarks of a director in control of a scene.

Friendship is a prevalent theme in Wright and Pegg's work, and is a thread that continued into *Hot Fuzz* (2007) and *The World's End* (2013). Ashfield has a tough job as the straight woman, and you do root for her and Shaun's relationship, but the real love story is between him and Ed. Frost and Pegg's pairing is both sweet and funny to watch.

Shaun Of The Dead strikes the right balance between comedy and horror, and after ten years it's still fresh and funny. *28 Days Later* made zombies threatening – even if it didn't use the Z-word – but *Shaun Of The Dead* made the undead fun again. 

Shaun Of The Dead is out now on Blu-ray and DVD.



WATCH FIRST



AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON (1981)

Two American backpackers are attacked with a werewolf. One is killed, and the other begins to transform into one himself. The transformation scene is still impressive over 30 years later.

WATCH NEXT



SCOTT PILGRIM VS THE WORLD (2010)

Bass player Scott has to defeat his dream woman's seven evil exes to continue dating her in Wright's live-action adaptation of Bryan Lee O'Malley's comic series.

YOUR TAKE ON THE CLASSIC

WHAT YOU THOUGHT @SCIFINOW



"Funny you should ask. Watched it Saturday. Yes pretty much. One or two minor itemd dated it but on the whole would work today." [@capnthommo](#)



"It will always hold up. So long as there is a real gun behind the bar of the Winchester." [@stupidkidkayl](#)



"Can anyone really get tired of a zombie beat down to the sound of *Don't Stop Me Now*?" [@JSParsonage](#)



"It's still the perfect film to watch when you need to have a cup of tea and wait for all this to blow over." [@imquitegood](#)



"Still awesome after 10 years. Holds it's place as the best British comedy/horror ever!" [@TWDSstuff](#)

ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS



4 The restaurant that Shaun tries to take Liz to is called Fulci's. Italian director Lucio Fulci directed *Zombie Flesh Eaters*, a semi-sequel to Romero's *Dawn Of The Dead*.

DAY OF THE DEAD



5 David's quite spectacular disembowelment at the hands of the zombie horde outside the Winchester bears close resemblance to the deaths of both Torrez and Rickles in George Romero's *Day Of The Dead*.

GREMLINS TURNS 30

HOW COULD A TEAM-UP OF STEVEN SPIELBERG, CHRIS COLUMBUS AND JOE DANTE RESULT IN ANYTHING OTHER THAN ONE OF THE DEFINITIVE FEEL-GOOD FANTASY MOVIES OF THE EIGHTIES? YOU LAUGHED, SCREAMED AND AWW-ED, AND NOW WE CATCH UP WITH THE CAST AND CREATORS OF GREMLINS 30 YEARS ON...

"It was kind of like a huge practical joke played on the audience. For 45 minutes they were lulled into thinking it was *ET* 2, then suddenly when everyone was relaxed it freaked them out... or rather, Joe Dante freaked them out!"

Zach Galligan is talking about the ingeniously deceptive concept of *Gremlins*, in which he played Billy Peltzer, the shy teen who goes up against the terrorising offspring of his impossibly cute Mogwai (meaning 'devil monster' in Cantonese) Christmas present 'Gizmo' in the comedy classic that is indeed one half a cuddly, delightfully festive caper and the other a devilishly twisted creature feature.

"Nowadays, people kind of enjoy that subversive sensibility, when at the time it was like 'what is this? This is just wrong! I thought I was coming to see a fluffy cute creature movie!'" continues Galligan.

It all gestated (quite literally) in Chris Columbus' New York loft. The young, struggling scribe, who would go on to write the screenplay for enjoyably energetic Eighties teen adventure *The Goonies* and direct the first two *Home Alone* and *Harry Potter* outings, needed to prove himself, and was inspired by the unnerving sounds of scavenging rodents that plagued his attic late at night. Penning a spec script to prove his ability, the resulting concept landed on the lap of Steven Spielberg, who quickly realised its motion picture

potential and passed it on to pal Joe Dante, who had a modest hit a couple of years earlier with horror comedy *The Howling*.

With that film's producer, Michael Finnell (who was also involved with hit parody *Airplane!*) on board, Spielberg took the project to Warner Bros and co-produced the film as Amblin Entertainment's third feature, following the tremendous success of *ET*. After some considerable script revisions to tone down some of the more horrific elements in the story (more of

Estevez and Karate Kid Ralph Macchio – newcomer Galligan landed the lead thanks to some crucial chemistry with Cates.

"It was actually one of the easier parts I ever got," recalls Galligan. "We only read one scene where we're on a date and at the end, I don't know why I did it, but I put my head on her shoulder... then a day or two later I got the part. When I finally did the movie I asked Joe Dante what I did to land it, and he said, 'Steven saw the tape, and when you put your head on Phoebe's

shoulder he said 'Oh my God, the guy is in love with her already – I don't need to see anymore!'"

It was a role that the then 19-year old could also relate to. "I was the guy at the sixth grade dance who would go up and ask pretty girls to dance, and they would reject me and go with the cute guy," reveals Galligan. "I certainly knew what it was like to be kind of the loner who collected comic-books and did drawings – I totally identified!"

Perhaps something the actor took

longer to identify with was the daunting prospect of playing the lead in a major Spielberg production. "I was too young and stupid to realise, but once I got a tour of the sets, looked at the schedule and realised I was working 71 out of 75 shooting days, I thought to myself, 'Holy cow, this whole movie is just me and Gizmo!' Then I would have mini panic attacks in the mornings: I'd wake up and realise I have this day ahead of me, then freeze in bed and think, 'There's ➤

"ALL SORTS OF HORRIBLE THINGS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE HAPPENING, WITH THE GREMLINS BECOMING SUPER VIOLENT AND HEADS BOUNCING DOWN THE STAIRS"

ZACH GALLIGAN

which later), attention turned to casting the two likeable teenage leads that would help humanise proceedings.

Fresh off the sleeper success of coming-of-age comedy *Fast Times At Ridgemont High*, Phoebe Cates was cast as sweet-natured love interest Kate Beringer, while the search was on for someone to embody geeky teen Billy. In a part that was auditioned by practically every major young acting talent at the time – including, but not limited to Kevin Bacon, Judd Nelson, Emilio





BEHIND THE NEW BATCH

What star Zach Galligan really thought of *Gremlins 2*

Due in part to director Joe Dante's reluctance to repeat himself, it took six years for a sequel to *Gremlins* to surface. Whether you think it was worth the wait depends on your taste for the satirical, as *Gremlins 2: The New Batch* has it in shedloads.

"To this day it's hard to see a sequel that mocks the first one so completely," reflects Zach Galligan who, along with Phoebe Cates, reprised their roles for *The New Batch*. "Usually, the second one tries to continue or expand on the first one, while this tried to tear it to shreds and show up everything that was wrong with it and all its inconsistencies."

An unusual tactic for a follow up indeed, this New York tower-block-confined sequel spoofed the time zone implausibility of the 'never feed them after midnight' Mogwai rules, poked fun at all the titular merchandising and even comically cut off Cates during a potentially heartfelt follow-up to her iconic 'Santa Claus isn't real' monologue (a deliberate dig at the producers, who wanted to cut that scene from the original).

Sir Christopher Lee plays a Dr Frankenstein-type mad scientist, John Glover is surprisingly sympathetic as a sentimental version of Donald Trump, while a psychoanalytical Gremlin sounds, well, intellectually stimulating. Throw in a limitless array of cinematic in-jokes and pop-culture satire, and what you have is a less violent and more self-conscious outing that was a box-office disappointment, but remains an audacious sequel that was far ahead of its time.



Actor Zach Galligan has fond memories of working on *Gremlins*.



Some were fooled into believing *Gremlins* was a sweet, cuddly tale.



➤ no way I can do this!' But by the time I'd woken up, taken a shower and gotten dressed I had calmed down. Then, by the time I got into work I went in with confidence."

It certainly helped that the actors playing Galligan's parents, the late country singer Hoyt Axton and character actress Frances Lee McCain, weren't major stars. "There were a lot of great actors, but there wasn't really a huge intimidating star," considers Galligan. "[Randall] was supposed to be played by Dick Van Dyke, but he had a scheduling conflict. If Dick Van Dyke was my dad I probably would have lost my shit, because I grew up watching *Mary Poppins*! I actually think it turned out a lot better with someone like Hoyt who had an 'Oh

shirks, I'm just another guy from Oklahoma' kind of vibe about him."

A less loveable character was larger-than-life town scrooge Mrs Deagle, played by soft-spoken, Southern-toned actress Polly Holliday. "When I first got the script it said 'Mrs Deagle: the meanest woman in town!'" recalls the actress who embodied the ice-cold creation. "It was sort of based on Margaret Hamilton in *The Wizard Of Oz*, and that's sort of where the character was coming from... you wouldn't want to spend time with her; she was just an unpleasant woman."

The similarities with the original Wicked Witch of the West continued all the way to the character's



The Gremlins were originally intended to be even more brutal, and with carnivorous tendencies.

SPIELBERG VS THE CENSORS

How the father of feel-good flicks changed the rules



The microwave scene led to the creation of the PG-13 rating in the US.

What has a Gremlin melting in a microwave and a beating heart in a hand got in common? Answer: they're both too graphic-for-the-time moments in Spielberg films that were responsible for the creation of the PG-13 certificate in the US.

The sacrificial beating heart sequence from *Indiana*

Jones And The Temple Of Doom momentarily etched the archeologist adventure into horror territory, while the microwaved Gremlin was the point of juncture where Dante's cute and cuddly film suddenly turned nasty.

An uproar occurred when parents took their kids to see PG-rated productions

and these scenes of graphic carnage occurred, prompting them to argue for more parental guidance in the form of an R-rated stamp. Spielberg disagreed, but offered a compromise: as there was no middle ground between a PG (which grouped together infants aged up to 17) and R-rating (which required parents to accompany children under 17), why not create one?

Spielberg suggested the PG-13 certificate, which was approved by the Motion Picture Association of America. This led to *Red Dawn*, John Milius' 1984 action adventure, becoming the debut PG-13 movie, and a subsequent influx of kiddy-themed films containing slightly edgier content.

memorable demise courtesy of a malfunctioning stairlift that thrusts her through her top story window, a sequence Holliday even had some creative input into. "I told Joe Dante, 'Wouldn't it be funny if I had on these little booties and you see my feet sticking out of the snow bank the way Margaret Hamilton was sticking out from underneath the house in *The Wizard Of Oz*?' So he put it in there!"

If you thought Mrs Deagle was a force to be reckoned with, nothing prepared audiences for the real monsters of the show. "The directives for the Gremlins' design were straightforward: 'Make 'em real scary,'" says Oscar-winning FX maestro Chris Walas, who was tasked with creating the titular creatures whose design phrase altered as the production developed. "The original story was a straight horror tale, so the preliminary designs were more realistic," he continues. "The Mogwai had to be cute and cuddly, [but] I wanted to make sure that once they turned to Gremlins the audience still felt the biological connection in the design. The Gremlins in many ways are the reverse of the Mogwai: where the Mogwai were soft and furry, the Gremlins were scaly and toothy. I always viewed them as two phases of childhood: the sweet, cute baby phase and the troublemaking, getting-into-everything toddler phase."

The original script differed considerably, with Gizmo actually turning into a Gremlin instead of giving birth to them. It was Spielberg



"WE DIDN'T THINK THE MICROWAVE WOULD EVER BE IN THE MOVIE, SO WE WENT WHOLE HOG ON IT... IT WAS A LOT OF YUCK" CHRIS WALAS

who thought Gizmo was too cute a character for this to happen to, so the concept of two separate entities was designed, dramatically altering the tone of the film.

"All sorts of horrible things were supposed to be happening," adds Galligan, "with the Gremlins becoming super violent and heads bouncing down the stairs... Spielberg got involved and said, 'We're gonna put the breaks on that right now!'" Indeed, the decapitated head that the actor refers to was in fact supposed to be his on-screen mother, who loses it in a fight with the creatures. In addition to this, the Gremlins were originally intended to eat Billy's faithful canine companion Barney and, in probably one of the most audacious unrealized sequences, the Gremlins attack a branch of McDonalds, discarding the burgers but eating the customers!

Toning down the on-screen onslaught didn't reduce the amount of technical problems the production faced, however, particularly concerning the mechanics of our furry friend. "When it went well it was great, and when things broke down it meant there were tremendous delays," reveals Galligan about Gizmo. "The springs

would snap, we would recognise the sound of it breaking, and Chris Walas would come over, look at it and say, 'Looks like about six or seven hours,' so we would go off to Spielberg's office and play videogames!"

Walas recalls the challenges he and his technical team faced with the ever-changing production. "There were a lot of intricate puppets in the show, and they weren't just in a few scenes; they were in a lot of the movie, so there were invariably a lot of cables popping and radio control interference that plagued us," he says. "The continual changes in the action also put the puppets through a lot of unplanned, spontaneous actions, which was a real strain on them, so maintenance was a huge ongoing job."

Part of the challenge was keeping up with Dante's enthusiastic creative spontaneity. "Once Joe saw what might be possible with the puppets, he really got creative with the gags. That worked fantastically for the film, but was a continual challenge for me and my crew to keep up with," admits Walas.

Galligan recalls how Dante's editing background (he co-edited his previous horror features *Piranha* and *The Howling* with Mark Goldblatt) aided the filmmaker with an extraordinary ability to envision the film as he shot it. ➤



Actress Frances Lee McCain bore the brunt of the Gremlins' assault.

"EVERY TIME GIZMO BROKE WE WOULD GO OFF TO SPIELBERG'S OFFICE AND PLAY VIDEOGAMES" ZACH GALLIGAN



As with many classics, the prospect of a possible remake is never far away.

"He was really fun to work with because he was always cutting the movie in his head, editing it as he went along," he says. "So it was cool to work with someone who pretty much knew exactly what the movie looked like before he even shot it!"

Arguably one of the most memorable set pieces in the movie is the home invasion scene, where Mrs Peltzer goes to battle with the creatures in her kitchen using any means at her disposal, the home blender and microwave becoming particularly beneficial and leading to some truly gruesome moments.

"Even when we were doing it, we all thought the microwave gag might be a bit over the top," reveals Walas about the eye-opening scene where a Gremlin explodes in the microwave. "We really didn't think the shot would ever be in the movie, so we went whole hog on it... it was a lot of yuck, and the whole interior of the microwave was covered in the mess. The entire crew groaned horribly when we shot it!"

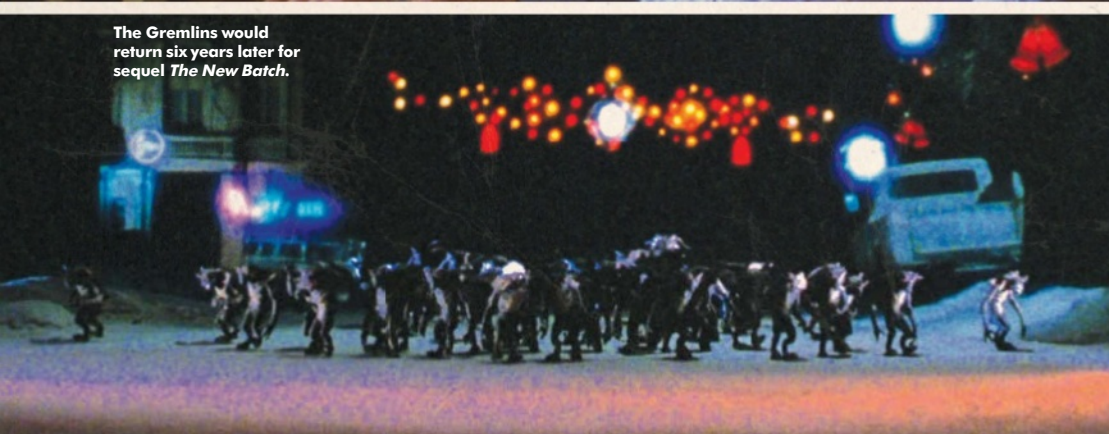
The scene in question was partially responsible for the creation of the PG-13 certificate (see boxout), while US critic Leonard Maltin fiercely disapproved of the violence and mayhem caused by the Gremlins, landing him a tongue-in-cheek cameo in the satirised sequel where he repeats his criticisms and is subsequently attacked by the creatures as a result.

Gremlins also contained some classic non-violent comedic moments, particularly involving the malfunctioning of Peltzer senior's inventions, usually at the expense of Peltzer Jr. "We only did two or three takes of the [orange juicer scene] because I literally had to get in the shower after each take... that thing blasted me with so much orange juice it would take ten minutes for them to comb the pulp out of my hair!" Galligan recalls. "The scene you see in the film is the last one shot. I'm trying to keep it together - it's just too funny!"

Controversially, it was the lighter elements of *Gremlins* that were pushed during the ad campaign. One particular trailer focused entirely on Gizmo and completely overlooked the titular creatures in an attempt to plug a much softer film that would appeal to the family friendly likes of *ET*. But it looks like it wasn't just



The *Gremlins* would return six years later for sequel *The New Batch*.



the audience who were tricked into thinking this was a cute and cuddly comedy. "I must admit, when I read the script I thought it was going to be charming," remembers Holliday. "So I was surprised it turned out to be so scary and horrible... you work on things and you never quite know."

On 8 June 1984, *Gremlins* premiered in US cinemas on the same day as the equally comedy horror-themed *Ghostbusters*, ranking second behind that film in its first weekend and becoming the fourth-highest grossing film of that year. But perhaps most impressive is how *Gremlins* was tailored to appeal to a broader international audience, with Gizmo's dialogue (voiced primarily by Howie Mandel) recorded in different languages that included jokes and cultural references specific to different countries.

This was also the beginning of the popular Eighties era of comedy horror, where earlier films like *The Howling* and later Tim Burton's *Beetlejuice* masterfully blended genres to hilariously zany effect. But *Gremlins* stands out thanks to its picture-postcard setting and nostalgic admiration for old classic family movies like *The Wizard Of Oz* and Frank Capra's *It's A Wonderful Life*, a clip of which features early in the film.

"Behind the nasty mischief of the film lies a warm and heartfelt love of the subject matter," considers Walas. "I think that's something that audiences appreciate, and even love about the film. It also finds a perfect blend of horror and comedy, of cute and fuzzy as well as mean and nasty."

"It was a horror movie, but it was full of funny things," muses Holliday. "You knew you were watching a movie, and that the characters in it were sort of tongue-in-cheek. It was a charming movie in a way, and then utterly scary."

For Galligan it was the timeless quality of the film that appealed to him, except for one minor detail, perhaps. "I remember thinking at the time that there wasn't a lot that kind of identified it as an Eighties movie, and I think it holds up because it doesn't have a lot of the Eighties in it, except maybe my hair!" he laughs, referring to his dated on-screen curls.

A somewhat belated, satirical sequel followed in 1990 (see boxout), but in more recent times talk has turned to the inevitable remake. "I think it's logical, but I haven't seen anything, so it's just a blank canvas at the moment," continues Galligan. "I think if they're smart they'll at least do animatronics for Gizmo and maybe CGI on some of the other things."

Walas is skeptical regarding the prospect of regurgitating Dante's classic. "I'm not sure how an update would work, and more importantly I don't know how feasible it is to hit that delicate balance of horror, comedy and heart that Joe managed," he adds. "I know that CGI is the way things are done these days, but I think the fact that we used puppets allowed the audience to accept the fantasy level of the film. I'd hate to see the *Gremlins* redone as pure CGI, simply because I think they would lose a lot of their uniqueness."

From its cozy Christmas town setting, groundbreaking puppetry, charming characterisation, magical comedic touches and subtle shift in tone to horror film territory,



Gremlins remains an undisputable festive favourite 30 years on, and a formula that should remain pretty hard to duplicate.

Gremlins is available to purchase now on Blu-ray.

MOM AND POP SCARE



Frances Lee McCain talks about doing battle with those nasty Gremlins

You had a very natural quality as Billy's mother in *Gremlins*. What did you

try to bring to the role?

Joe is not a director who, at least in this film, delves much into character analysis – frankly, when you're doing an essentially broad-stroke comic-book style of film, that would be pretty tedious! What he did convey, and I tried to live up to, was a wife and mother who loved her husband and son in spite of their foibles, who was happy with her lot in life and content to let her loved ones be who they were. However, she might worry about the future, and therefore – in my mind – a woman who could turn into a fierce protectress when circumstances called for it!

What was it like filming the home confrontation scene?

The throwing of the plates, particularly as I used the TV tray as a shield, was a bit of a nightmare. Because of filmic angles I had to yell and advance on an imaginary Gremlin, not on the fellow off-camera who was throwing plates at me. So I couldn't look directly at where the plates were coming from, which made for some dicey moments for both the guy throwing the plates and me! I thought [microwaving the Gremlin] was brilliant, as it portrayed a popular urban myth of the time, with lots of stories of cats blown up in microwaves.

And being attacked by a Christmas Tree?

Filming those scenes were a real hoot for us all, in spite of trying to work out the technicalities. The fight with the Christmas tree was especially hilarious as I recall, with a puppet attached to my neck while I did all the work of thrashing about to make it look real. Also, we filmed the moment when I approach the kitchen (after turning off the record player) in reverse, so to speak, where I had to start by peering into the kitchen and then pull back. In the film itself that piece actually runs backwards, so it looks as though I gather courage and then peer into the kitchen. I remember those sequences quite fondly as days of great collaboration, lots of laughter amid the problem solving, and a sense of accomplishment when we felt we'd got things right.



Special
trial offer

Enjoyed
this book?



Exclusive offer for new



Try
3 issues
for just
£5*

* This offer entitles new UK direct debit subscribers to receive their first three issues for £5. After these issues, subscribers will then pay £21 every six issues. Subscribers can cancel this subscription at any time. New subscriptions will start from the next available issue. Offer code ZGGZIN must be quoted to receive this special subscriptions price. Direct debit guarantee available on request.

** This is a US subscription offer. The USA issue rate is based on an annual subscription price of £65 for 13 issues, which is equivalent to approx \$102 at the time of writing compared with the newsstand price of \$158.87 for 13 issues (\$11.99 per issue). Your subscription will start from the next available issue.



About
the
mag



Dedicated to
all things sci-fi

Written by experts

Written by enthusiasts of the genre, who have
a passion for science fiction

Industry insights

In-depth features on the hottest topics,
plus interviews with some of the biggest
names in the business

Essential reviews

All the latest films, TV shows and books
reviewed and rated

subscribers to...

SciFiNow

Try 3 issues for **£5 in the UK***
or just **\$7.85 per issue in the USA****
(saving 35% off the newsstand price)

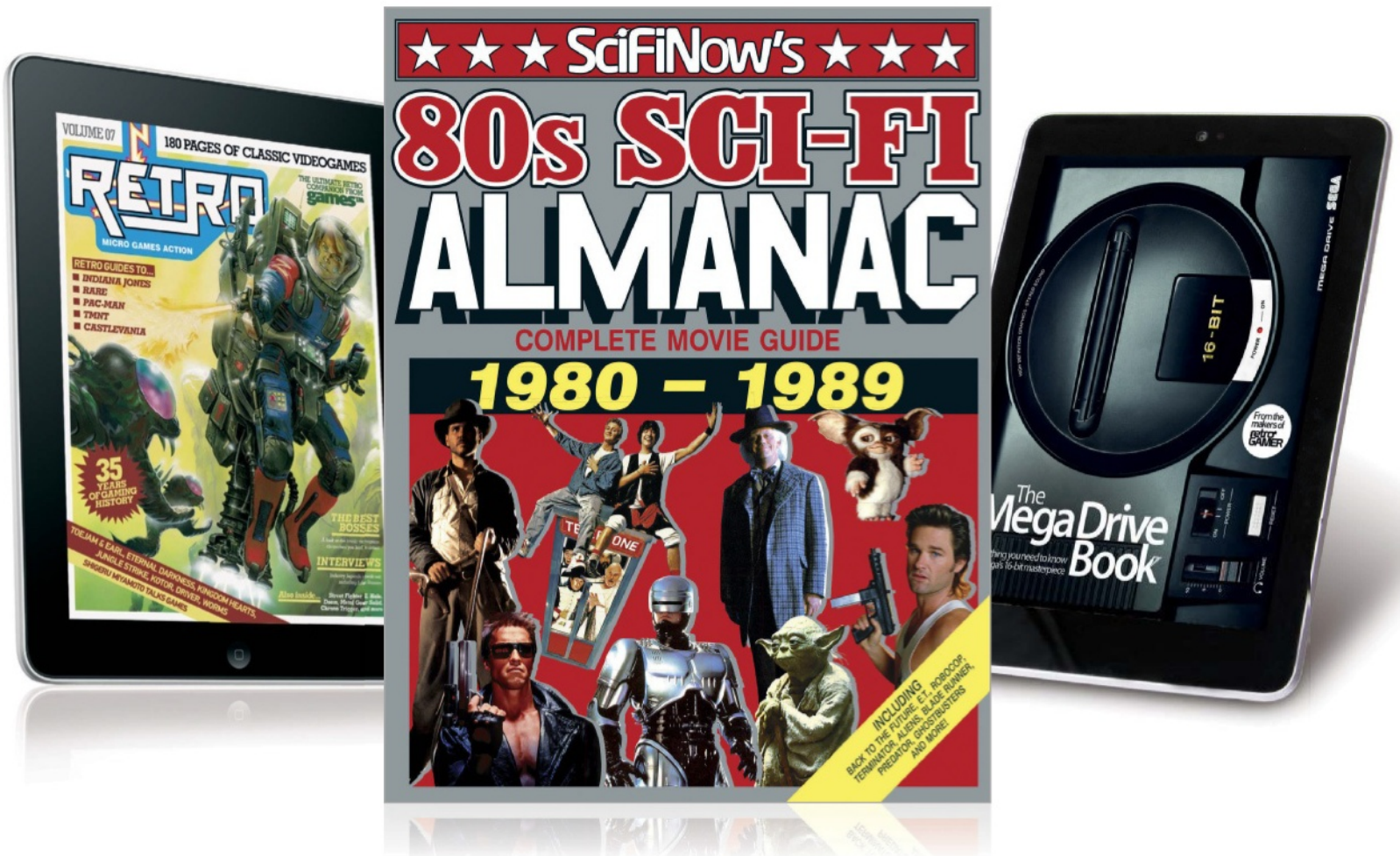
For amazing offers please visit

www.imaginesubs.co.uk/sci

Quote code **ZGGZIN**

Or telephone UK 0844 844 0245 Overseas +44 (0) 1795 414 619

Welcome back to the golden age



RETRO COLLECTIONS

Revisit the games, films, shows and hardware that defined entertainment for a generation

BUY YOUR COPY TODAY

Print edition available at www.imagineshop.co.uk

Digital edition available at www.greatdigitalmags.com

Available on the following platforms



facebook.com/ImagineBookazines



twitter.com/Books_Imagine



SciFiNow



A COLLECTION OF THE WORLD'S BEST SCI-FI,
FANTASY AND HORROR MAGAZINE

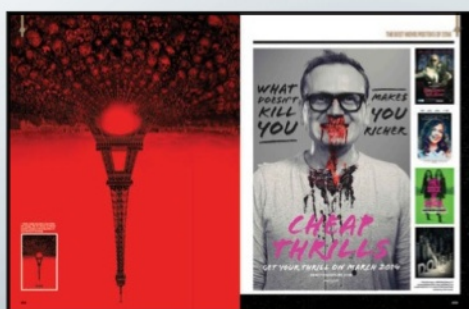


THE BIG SCREEN

Discover the best films of the year. From the Guardians of the Galaxy to rampaging monsters to a world made of Lego

THE SMALL SCREEN

From House Stark to Hannibal, the Doctor to the Arrow, Gotham City to Sleepy Hollow; explore the best of television from 2014



THE BEST OF TIMEWARP

Reflect on the best of retro sci-fi. Discover what makes Tim Burton's Batman memorable and the pesky Gremlins so lovable

SCI-FI PUZZLES & ARTWORK

No annual is complete without puzzles, defeat Count Vertigo, join the dots. There's even a guide to this year's best movie posters



www.imaginebookshop.co.uk